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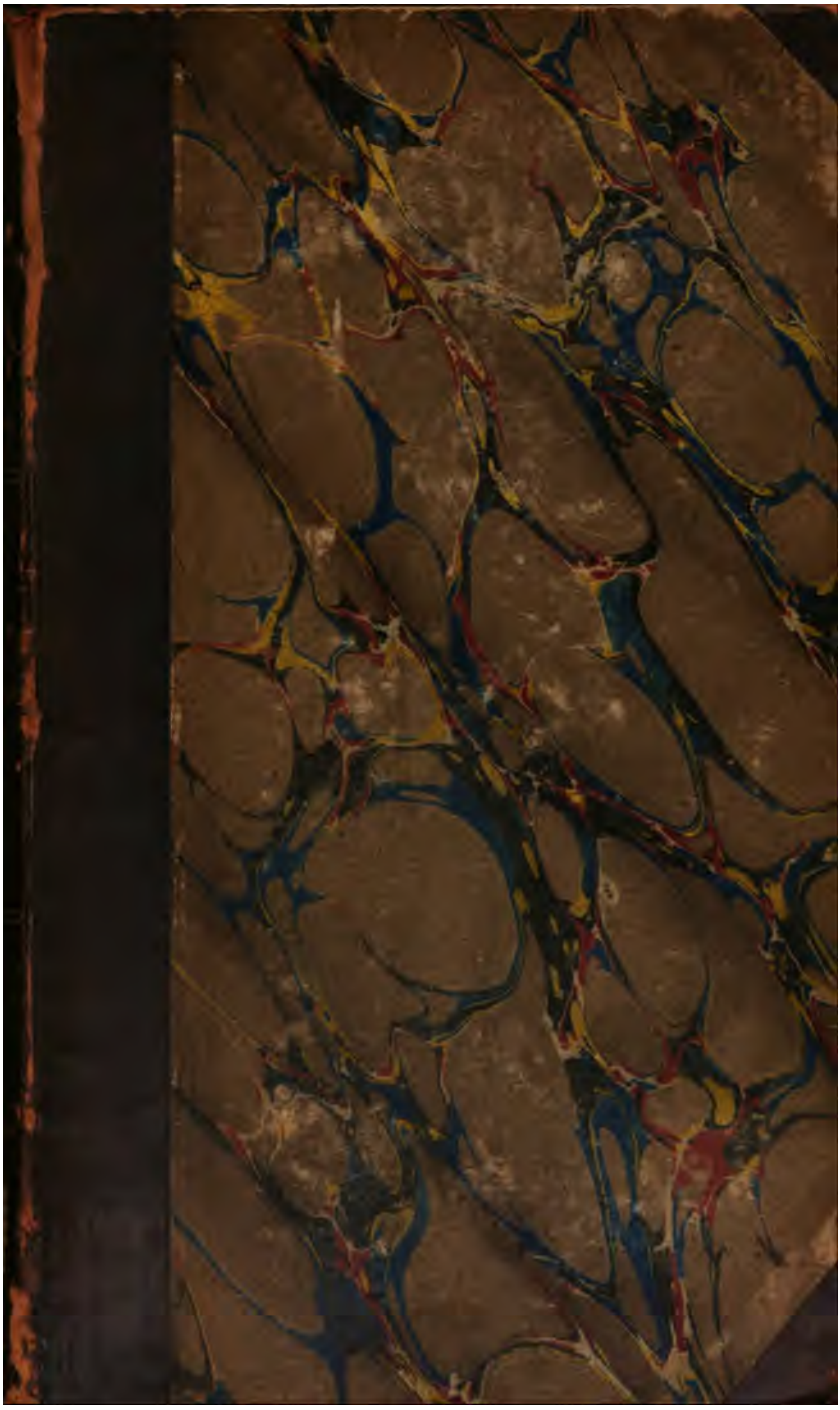

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THE

STUDENT AND PASTOR;

OR

DIRECTIONS

HOW TO ATTAIN TO EMINENCE AND USEFULNESS IN THOSE RESPECTIVE CHARACTERS.

To which are added,

A LETTER TO A FRIEND,

Upon his Entrance on the

Ministerial Office;

AND AN

ESSAY

ON

ELOCUTION AND PRONUNCIATION.

By JOHN MASON, M. A.
Author of a Treatise on Self-knowledge.

NEW EDITIONS, WITH ADDITIONS,
And an

ESSAY ON CATECHISING,

BY JOSHUA TOULMIN, D. D.

Επιχε σεαυτῳ καὶ τῃ διδασκαλιᾳ.
St. Paul ad Tim.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR H. D. SYMONDS, 20, PATERNOSTER ROW,
By C. Stower, Paternoster Row.

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PREFACE.

THESE papers were originally drawn up for the benefit of a young gentleman, who was a candidate for the sacred ministry. I conceived, that, if they were made more public, they might be of more extensive use; not only to academics who study with a view to the pastoral office, but to those who are lately entered upon it. And what the more induced me to make them so was, that (though we have many useful treatises on this subject) I do not remember to have seen any thing in our own language so comprehensive of the student's and pastor's office, or which represents both in so short a view. *Ostervald de l'Exercise du Ministére* (which a learned and valuable friend recommended to me when I was collecting these thoughts) comes the nearest to my plan, both in method and pre-

cision, of any thing I have seen. But as that is written in French, and is confined to the duties of the ministerial function, without any directions in the preparatory studies, I thought it not sufficient to supersede the prosecution of my design.

The present low state of practical christianity in this nation, from the prevalence of infidelity and libertinism on the one hand, and the power of delusion and enthusiasm on the other, is never enough to be lamented by those who have the religion of the gospel at heart. And though we must expect a divine Power to introduce a better face of things amongst us, yet how far this growing evil may be repelled, or diminished, by the awakened zeal, vigilance and wisdom of pastors and preachers in their respective departments, it becomes those who have the honour to appear in that sacred character seriously to consider. At least this is a powerful argument to excite their efforts to see what can be done; and to quicken them to greater diligence

diligence in the several parts of their holy function, in dependence on the divine blessing for the desired success.

And now reader, if thou art a candidate for the sacred ministry, or already entered upon it, I would (with my sincere prayer for the divine blessing) recommend the following sheets to thy serious perusal; not as a mere speculative treatise, but as a practical *enchiridion*.

——*Si quid novisti rectius istis,*
Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum.

HORACE.

THE

PREFACE TO THIS EDITION.

THE name of MR. MASON, though the author of many publications of merit and utility, is chiefly known by a valuable and useful

useful treatise on "Self-Knowledge," which first appeared from the press, in 1745, and has passed through many editions at home and been translated and circulated in several countries on the Continent.

We are indebted to the editor of that impression, which issued from the press of Messrs. Wilks and Taylor, in 1802. for an interesting "Account of his Life and Writings;" as far as he could collect materials for it, at so distant a date from his death. From which the following particulars may be, with propriety selected.

The Rev. JOHN MASON, was born at Dunmow, in Essex, in the year 1705—6. His father was a dissenting minister, and successively pastor to congregations at Daventry in Northamptonshire, Dunmow in Essex, and at Spalding in Lincolnshire, where he died, and was buried in 1722—3. It is not known, under whom Mr. Mason, received the earlier part of his education; but he pursued his academical studies, as a candidate for the ministry, under the

Rev.

Rev. and learned John Jennings, who conducted a very respectable seminary, about the year 1719, at Kibworth, and then at Hinkley, in Leicestershire. When he had finished his academical course, he became chaplain and private tutor in the family of Governor Feakes, at his seat near Hatfield. In 1729—30, he accepted an invitation to the pastoral charge of a congregation at Dorking, in Surry, where he continued, held in high estimation, both as a preacher and a friend, till July the 6th, 1746. To his hearers, he was able at the close, of seventeen years' ministry, to appeal for their testimony to the sincerity and earnestness of his labours in the cause in which he appears to have engaged from his heart. In this year, upon the invitation of a large and respectable congregation of dissenters, he removed to Cheshunt in Hertfordshire, where he spent the remainder of his days, as a very useful preacher. Nor was he less known as an author. During this period he found time, amidst his other

other important engagements, for the education of several young gentlemen for the ministry: and the course of polemical lectures, which he read to them, were printed in the Protestant Dissenter's Magazine, for the years 1794, 1795 and 1796.

After a life devoted to the attainment and diffusion of useful knowledge, he died February 10th, 1763, in the 58th year of his age; his death was occasioned by a cold caught from a fog and mist, with which he was surrounded, as he went to visit a friend about two miles from Cheshunt. He left behind him a widow, the daughter of the Rev. James Waters of Uxbridge; but no child to exhibit a father's virtues, or emulate his example.

He was buried in the church-yard of Cheshunt, where there is the following inscription to his memory.

Here rests all that was mortal
Of the late rev. learned and pious
JOHN MASON, M. A.

who

who was minister to the
congregation of
Protestant Dissenters in this parish 17 years.
He ceased from his labours,
and was called to receive his reward
Feb. 10. 1763. Aged 58 years.
"Be followers of them who through faith and
patience inherit the promises."

A writer, in the Gentleman's Magazine, says, that those who remember Mr. Mason, will recollect "a striking resemblance in his person to that of Dr. Jortin. His manner, though to modern hearers it would appear heavy and monotonous, was in his day impressive*."

His habits and mode of life were peculiarly regular and uniform. He was free, easy, communicative and pleasant in conversation, and much of the gentleman appeared in all his behaviour. His acquaintance was much sought after and he

* Mag. for July, 1804. p. 614.

himself

himself took great delight in society. He was an enemy to controversy and a friend to peace. His religion was thoroughly catholic and therein truly christian: and he was ready to discern and acknowledge real merit, and esteem true learning and piety wherever he met with it. His sermons were correct, clear, nervous, and always illustrative of the text and doctrine; they were ever adapted to promote the purposes of piety and charity. During his illness, which was but of few days, and under all the pains with which he had then to struggle, his mind was remarkably serene and composed. As he retained the use of his reasoning powers to the last, so to the last he was calm and resigned: his end truly was peace.

Besides several single sermons and tracts, Mr. Mason published seven volumes of Discourses on devotional and practical subjects, and on Christian Morals, which were well received. Next to the treatise on "Self-

"Self-Knowledge." the following pieces, now collected together, were the most popular of our author's publications.

"The Student and Pastor," shews the man of observation and reflection; and is fraught with pertinent, prudential and useful maxims, displaying the good sense as well as the piety of the writer. It is concise, yet comprehensive. The extensive view which it takes of the duties of the pastor, and the salutary and judicious advices which it contains, do not supersede the counsels offered in "A Letter to a Friend upon his entrance on the Ministerial Office," which was first published in the year 1753: several years before the appearance of "The Student and Pastor." It was drawn up at the desire of a young gentleman, who had been his pupil, the Rev. Mr. Stanshall, late of Chertsea. The "Essay on Elocution," was a publication prior to the other two pieces about the year 1749, or 50. It was received with great approbation, and in the course of a few years

years went through three impressions, and may be considered as the foundation of many of our popular essays on the same subject. Mr. Dodsley, publisher, eminent for genius and taste, adopted it and inserted it in the "Preceptor." It was we are told by his biographer, originally published without the name of the author, and met, in that state, with considerable encouragement and patronage, at one of our public Universities; but when Mr. Mason claimed it as his own, by prefixing his name to the second edition, that learned body is said to have scouted it from their walls as the work of a dissenter.

These three tracts are so evidently congenial to each other, so well adapted to promote the same design, that no doubt can be admitted on the propriety and utility of connecting them together in one volume; and of offering them as a manual worthy the study and frequent perusal of the young minister, who is ambitious to support his character, and fulfil its duties with

with decorum, dignity and usefulness. The editor would recommend, that this volume should be interleaved and kept as a text, or common-place book, to be often consulted; and to admit either references to, or transcripts, under the different heads and chapters, of such rules and observations, as may offer in a course of reading. But even the cast of the eye, on a suitable section, previously to the performing any ministerial function, may be truly serviceable and impressive; may suggest a hint, on which to act, may furnish a rule of conduct, may bring the mind into a proper frame, or may excite a sentiment of piety. The editor earnestly wishes to press on his younger brethren the importance of frequently reading tracts on the nature and duties of their office and the occasional discourses that bear the name of charges. He has found the benefit of such reading, and it is an obvious reflection, that it cannot but be expedient and useful, that ministers, as well as orators

and

and poets, or physicians, should be conversant with that course of reading, which will supply rules and models of excellence in their own particular department. He begs leave to offer a list of pieces of this class at the end of this preface.

He recollects that when Mr. Mason's "Student and Pastor," underwent the review of the Monthly Critic at that period, the writer of the article observed with some degree of censure, the total omission of catechising in the enumeration of the ministerial functions. He has endeavoured to supply this omission. Under some other heads he has made such additions as appeared to him to be important and useful, if not necessary. He was the more ready to do this, that he might avail himself of the opportunity to bring forward and preserve some interesting passages, from excellent, but fugitive pieces *.

* N. B. The capital letters of the Roman alphabet, mark the editor's additions.

The

The editor cannot conclude this preface without one remark, the truth and force of which he hopes will be owned and felt by every young minister: namely, that it is of the utmost moment to cherish and keep alive the true spirit of the pastoral office. Rules may direct the performance of its functions: but it will be, however correct, a merely artificial, laboured, he is almost tempted to say, an insincere and hypocritical discharge of them, if it be not animated by that earnestness of mind, that love of its duties, that zeal to attain its end, that ambition to approve ourselves to our divine Master, the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, which constitute the spirit of the office. "A minister of religion who dislikes the business of his calling, who has not even an ardent love to it, must lead a very unpleasant life. He saunters away life in listlessness; he turns to his proper functions with reluctance; he toils through them with distaste; he performs them ill; and is dissatisfied with himself; and from this

this dissatisfaction, again performs them worse, and is more uneasy in his own feelings and reflections *." Whereas the sublime, generous spirit of the profession will secure diligence, rouse to exertion, create delight and fill the breast with satisfaction and hope.

Happy will the editor think himself, unostentatious as may be the task he has undertaken, if the re-publication of these valuable tracts should renew, and secure to a further extent, the pious and worthy ends which the excellent author proposed by their first appearance from the press.

* Gerrard's Pastoral Office, p. 93.

Tracts

Tracts on the Ministerial Character, besides those to which Mr. Mason refers.

Dr. WATTS's Humble Attempt for the Revival of Religion.

FORDYCE's Art of Preaching.

Dr. LEECHMAN's Temper, Character and Duty of a Minister of the Gospel.

Mr. JOHN JENNINGS's Two Discourses on Preaching Christ, and Experimental Preaching.

Mr. PHILIP HOLLAND's Character, Offices and Qualifications of the Christian Preacher, in the second volume of Sermons.

Mr. ORTON's Life of Dr. Doddridge, and Mr. Philip Henry.

Dr. GERRARD's Pastoral Care.

Mr. ORTON's Letters to Mr. Stedman.

————————Letters to Dissenting Ministers, 2 vols.

Mr. SAMUEL PALMER's, Abridgement of Baxter's Reformed Pastor.

Tracts on the Ministerial Character, &c.

Dr. DODDRIDGE's Preaching Lectures.

———————— Charges, in his Sermons and Tracts, 3 vols. 12mo. vol. ii.

BULKLEY's Christian Preacher.

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THE

STUDENT AND PASTOR.

PART I.

He that devotes himself to the work of the sacred ministry, should be continually intent on two things, viz. the improvement of his own mind, and the minds of others, in the most important and useful knowledge.

This comprehends the whole office of a student and pastor.

The business of a student is, to be so employed, as to be continually making some valuable accessions to his own intellectual furniture. To which five things are necessary. 1. A proper distribution and management of his time. 2. A right method of reading to advantage. 3. The order and regu-

lation of his studies. 4. The proper way of collecting and preserving useful sentiments from books and conversation. Lastly, The improvement of his thoughts when alone.

CHAP. I.

OF THE RIGHT DISTRIBUTION AND MANAGEMENT OF OUR TIME.

A STUDENT should be as frugal of his time, as a miser is of his money; should save it with as much care, and spend it with as much caution: "To be careful how we manage and employ our time is one of the first precepts that is taught in the school of wisdom, and one of the last that is learnt. And it is a prodigious thing to consider that although, amongst all the talents which are committed to our stewardship, time (upon several accounts) is the most precious, yet, there is not any one of which the generality of men are more profuse

profuse and regardless. Nay, it is obvious to observe, that even those persons who are frugal and thrifty in every thing else, are yet extremely prodigal of their best revenue, time; 'of which alone,' as Seneca nobly observed, 'it is a virtue to be covetous*.'. It is amazing to think how much time may be gained by proper economy†: and how much good literature may be acquired, if that gain be rightly applied. To this purpose, let the following rules be observed.

1. Take particular notice of those things which are most apt to rob you of your time. Upon such an inquest you will probably detect the following thieves‡.

1. The bed. Never allow yourself above six hours sleep at most. Physicians all tell you that nature demands no more for the proper recruits of health and spirits. All beyond this is luxury; no less prejudicial to the animal constitution than intemperate meals; and no less hurtful to the powers of the mind, than to those of the body. It insensibly weakens and relaxes both.

2. Ceremonious and formal visits. They may

* Norris's Miscel. p. 118.

† Ad summa perveniet nemo, nisi tempore, quo nihil esse fugacius constat, prudenter utatur. Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 100.

‡ O fures, O latrones, O tyrannos crudelissimos, quorum consilio mihi unquam periit Hora! Id. p. 104.

sometimes be necessary; but if they cannot be improved to some useful purpose, the shorter they are the better. Much of this time is spent to no purpose, and, it is to be feared, not a little of it to bad purpose.

3. Indolence is another thief of time. Indulging to a slow, heavy, unactive disposition; delaying, or deferring necessary business to a future time, which ought to be set about immediately; idle musing, or indulging to vain, chimerical imaginations. This is very natural to some, and as unnatural to others; and commonly leads to another, and greater waste of time, viz.

4. Sloth and idleness. No man takes more pains than the slothful man. Indolence and ease are the rust of the mind. No habit grows faster by indulgence, exposes to more temptations, or renders a man more uneasy to himself, or more useless to others*.

5. Reading useless books. Those books may be called useless to you, which you either do not understand; or if you do, afford neither solid improvement nor suitable entertainment. And especially pernicious books, or such as tend to give the mind a wrong turn, or bad tincture.

* Quædam tempora eripiuntur (sc. negotiis) nobis, quædam subducuntur (amicis), quædam effluunt (inertiæ): turpissima tamen est jactura quæ per negligentiam venit. Sen. Ep. 1.

6. Much

6. Much time is often lost by a wrong method of studying, and especially by applying to those branches of learning which have no connexion with the great end you propose. Why should a divine affect the civilian, or dive into the depths of politics, or be ambitious to excel in the abstrusest parts of mathematical science? He has spent much time and labour in these disquisitions, and at last gained his point. But, after all his expense, what is he the better preacher, or the better man? In every undertaking (especially when we enter upon a new course of study) we should remember the *cui bono,* and ask ourselves, how far this is like to improve our usefulness, or add to our reputation, under that character we are about to sustain, and wherein we aim at some degree of distinction?

Lastly, much time is lost by an unnatural bent of the mind to a study to which it is not disposed, or by which the faculties are already fatigued; it will find great relief by a change of employment. A man that rides post to save time would not chuse to be always spurring a jaded horse, but will rather change him for a fresh one, whereby he makes a speedier progress, with more ease to himself. *Nil invitâ Minervâ.* The activity of the mind is so great, that it often finds more relief and refreshment by turning to a new track of thinking, different from that it was tired in, than it does from a total relaxation of thought in mere bodily exercise; which

which shews that it is not labour that tires it, so much as a dull uniformity of employment; since it is more refreshed by variety than rest*.

2. Let your most precious time, (viz. that wherein the thoughts are most composed and free) be sacred to the most serious and important studies. Give the morning to composition, or the reading some valuable author of antiquity, with whom it is worth your while to be well acquainted. The afternoon will suffice for history, chronology, politics, news, travels, geography, and the common run of pamphlets: and let books of entertainment amuse a dull hour, when you are fit for nothing else. To apply your early time, or fresh

* Post lectione seu stylo defessus nihil nitor repugnante naturâ: sed exercitii genus aliud quæro, quo tædium varietas minuat. Rin. de Rat. Stud. p. 110.

[Dr. Doddridge, his biographer informs us, thought, and often told his pupils, that one good work was the best relaxation from another; and therefore he would not allow any chasm between the several kinds and branches of business he was to transact. Orton's life of Doddridge, p. 163, 164, 8vo. The studies of Dr. Priestley, it deserves notice in this connection, were very varied, which, as he was always persuaded, enabled him to do so much. This he constantly attended to through life; his chemical and philosophical pursuits serving as a kind of relaxation from his theological studies. His miscellaneous reading, which was at all times very extensive, comprising even novels and plays, still served to increase the variety. Memoirs, v. i. p. 184, 185. T.]

thoughts

thoughts to these, is like drinking wine in a morning: and giving too much of our time and thoughts to them, is like drinking the same intoxicating liquor to excess, and will have the same effect on the mind, as that has on the body.

3. Remember to be always before-hand with your business, *post est occasio calva.* Whatever must be done, and may be done now as well as hereafter, for that very reason had better be done now. This is a prudent maxim in life, applicable to a thousand cases; and of no less advantage to a student than a tradesman. Defer nothing to the very last, lest some intervening accident should prevent the execution of an important purpose, or put you into a hurry in the prosecution of it. And what is done with precipitance and haste seldom succeeds so well, or is executed with that accuracy and discretion, as what is the effect of more mature and deliberate thought. A traveller that must reach his home in a given time, would not be thought discreet, if, by loitering at the beginning of his journey, he is forced to run himself out of breath at the end.

4. That time is not lost, but improved, which is spent in those exercises which are necessary to invigorate and strengthen the faculties for harder work; or to preserve a good state of health and spirits; as eating, drinking, sleeping, physic, bodily exercise, recreations, and the like. Because, through

through a neglect of these, a student may contract a bad habit of body, or mind; or so far impair his constitution as to render him a long time unfit for useful service. But (*est modus in rebus*, &c.) and excess of these things defeats their end, and is as prejudicial to health, as a discreet and moderate use of them is conducive to it*.

Lastly, enter upon nothing, but what you are determined to pursue and finish. Much time is often lost by vain attempts, and leaving useful designs imperfect. For as he who begins to build a house, but never completes it, must set down to his loss the greatest part of his money thus expended: So a student who desists from a work (*re infectâ*), wherein he has taken much pains, is chargeable with as fruitless an expense of his time, as the other is of his money †.

CHAP. II.

* Such diversions as his (viz the clergyman's) health, or the temper of his mind, may render proper for him, ought to be manly, decent and grave; and such as may neither possess his mind or time too much, nor give a bad character of him to others. His cheerfulness ought to be frank, but neither excessive nor licentious. His friends and his garden ought to be his chief diversions, and his study his chief employment. Burnet's Disc. of the Past. Care, ch. viii.

† If you are writing a book, or engaged in any work which requires much time and pains to execute, lay it down as a rule, to let no day pass without putting a hand to it. *Nulla dies sine linea*, will carry you, like a steady traveller, a vast length in one year.

["So

CHAP. II.

THE WAY TO READ AUTHORS TO ADVANTAGE.

A STUDENT should be as careful what books he reads, as what company he keeps. They both leave the same tincture on the mind.

1. Do not read indiscriminately; nor indulge a curiosity of perusing every new book that comes out, nor desires to read it, until, from the known ability of the author, or the information of some judicious friend, you know it is worth your reading. The curiosity of Vanillus to be personally acquainted with men and their characters, leads him into all company when he is at Bath; and when

["So far as I can recollect, I never omitted," says Dr. Doddridge, "a single lecture on account of any of the books that I have published. The truth is, I do a little now and then, something every day, and that carries me on." This rule he assiduously observed, while he was preparing his *Family Expositor* for the press; taking his papers with him on a journey, or occasional visits to a friend, where he spent the night. Life, p. 166. T.]

he hears of a new stranger, he is uneasy until he knows him, and is able to give others a description of his person, equipage, and family. By this turn of temper Vanillus loses much time, which would be more agreeably and profitably spent in the conversation of a few select friends. He knows men, but not human nature. There is a wide difference between a man of reading, and a man of learning. One cannot read every thing; and if we could, we should be never the wiser. The bad would spoil the good, fill our minds with a confused medley of sentiments and desires, and the end of reading would be quite defeated for want of time and power to improve and practise. A man that eats of every dish at table, overloads his stomach, is sick, and digests nothing. He had better have fasted*.

2. Lay aside the fruitless inclination of reading a trifling author quite through, in hopes of finding something better at the end. You are sure of finding something better in another on the same subject; therefore lose not a certainty for the sake of a mere possibility. Why should you confine yourself to listen to the impertinence of one man, when, by only turning your back, you may be enter-

* Distrahit animum librorum multitudo——Fastidientis stomachi multa degustare, quæ ubi varia sunt & diversa inquinant, non alunt. Sen. Ep. 1.

tained

tained and improved by the more pleasing and instructive conversation of another?

3. Observe the characteristical beauties of your author. Every good writer has his peculiar felicity, his distinguishing excellence. Some excel in style; entertain us with easy, natural language; or with an elegance and propriety of expression; or delight us with their florid, smooth, and well-turned periods. Some love a figurative, diffuse, and flowing style.—Others, quite a plain, rational, discursive one. Each have their excellence. But the most elegant is that which is most natural, proper, and expressive; it cannot *then* be too short and plain, both to *delight* and *instruct*—the two great ends of language. A style overloaded with studied ornaments grows prolix; and prolixity always weakens or obscures the sentiment it would express. No decorations of well-chosen words, or harmony of cadence, can atone for this fault.—Such a style is like a lady who, in adorning her person, spoils a good shape by a tawdry dress, and a fine face by paint and patches. Both proceed from the same affectation, in preferring the embellishments of art to those of nature, whose charms are infinitely more powerful and pleasing.—Others excel in sentiments. Those sentiments strike us with most pleasure, that are strong, or clear, or soft, or sublime, pathetic, just, or uncommon. Whatever

ever has the most weight and brevity finds the quickest way to the heart.—Others excel in method; in a natural disposition of the subject, and an easy, free, familiar way of communicating thoughts to the understanding. Nothing is very striking. You approve and are well pleased with your author, and you scarce know for what. This resembles the *je ne sais quoi, tout agréable,* in the very humour, turn, and air, of some people we converse with.—Others are very happy in their manner and way of conveying clear, rational, solid arguments and instructions to the mind, which arrest your attention, command your approbation, and force your assent at once. You see every thing in broad day, in a fair and strong and proper light. A perfect writer has all these excellences of style, sentiment, method and manner united. A judicious reader will observe in which of them his author mostly excels.

4. From all your authors choose one or two for your model, by which to form your style and sentiments, and let them be your *Enchiridia,* your pocket-companions. Consult and imitate them every day, until you are not only master of their style and sentiments, but imbibe their spirit. But be very cautious both in your choice and imitation, lest with their excellences you adopt their faults,

to

to which an excessive veneration for them may make you blind *.

5. If your author have an established reputation, and you do not relish him, suspect your own taste and judgment. Perhaps something has biassed your mind against him: find it out and compare it with those beauties which charm his other readers more than all his blemishes offend them †. Or perhaps you do not understand him: then it is no wonder you do not admire him. If your judgment be good, it is a sure sign your author is so, when, the more you read him, the more you like him. A good friend and a good book are known by this: they grow in your esteem as you grow in acquaintance with them.

When you meet with such an author on any subject, stick by him, make yourself master of him. You will discover new beauties in him every time you read him, and regret not that you are unread in the common rubbish. Some books better de-

* Certis ingeniis immorari et innutriri oportet, si velis aliquid attrahere quod in animo fideliter redeat —— probatos itaque semper lege, et siquando ad alios divertere libuerit, ad priores redi. Sen. Ibid.

† —— Ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.
Hor. de Art. Poet. l. 350,

serve

serve to be read through ten times, than others once*.

6. Before you sit down to a book, taste it; i. e. examine the title-page, preface, contents and index; then turn to the place where some important article is discussed: observe the writer's diction, argument, method, and manner of treating it. And if after two or three such trials, you find he is obscure, confused, pedantic, shallow, or trifling, depend upon it he is not worth your reading.

Lastly. If the book be your own, make marks at the margin against those passages where the sentiment is well conceived or expressed, and worth your remembering or retailing; or transfer it into your common-place book, under the head your author is treating of; or at least a reference to it†. In reading an ancient Latin or Greek author, it will be a help to the memory to transcribe the passages that struck you most, in the spare leaves at the beginning or end of the book, in English; and, by thus skimming off the cream, you will have it always ready for use. If you meet with a happy

* — Decies repetita placebunt. Juv.

† Inter legendum authorem non oscitanter observabis, si quod incidat insigne verbum, si quod argumentum, aut inventum acutè, aut tortum aptè, si qua sententia digna quæ memoriæ commendetur: isque locus erit aptâ notulâ quaplam insigniendus. Erasm. de Rat. Stud.

expression, or even one well-chosen word on any subject, which you may have occasion to use, (and wish it may occur to you when you are at a loss for expressions), mark it, and make it your own for ever*. Thus you will read with taste and profit, and avoid the censure which falls upon—

> A bookish blockhead, ignorantly read,
> With loads of learned lumber in his head.

* Quanto pluris feceris exiguum proventum, tanto ad altiora doctrinæ vestigia es evasurus. Qui vilissimos quosque nummos admirantur, intuenter crebro, et servant accuratè, ad summas sæpenumero divitias perveniunt; pari modo, si quis aptarit sudorum metam benè scribere, discat mirari benè scripta, discat gaudere, si vel nomina duo conjunxerit venustè. Rin. de Rat. Stud. p. 111.

CHAP. III.

HOW TO STUDY TO ADVANTAGE.

HERE we must consider both the subjects and method.

As to the subjects of your study.

Consider what will make you most eminent and useful in your profession*: this kind of study is to be your serious business, and daily and diligently prosecuted. In all your reading keep this point in view. A traveller should have his right road and the end of his journey always in his eye, whatever little diversions or excursions he may indulge by the

* Quisquis verbum Domini statuit sincerè prædicare, perpetuus et assiduus sit oportet in sancti propositi meditatione, ut sibi constent omnia vitæ studia. Eras. Eccl. p. 6, 7.

Quemadmodum enim non inscitè dixit quidam, "tum eruditum appellandum esse, non qui didicerit plurima, sed qui optima maximaque necessaria;" ita non est necesse ut futurus Ecclesiastes in quibuslibet consumat operam atque ætatem——sed ea primum ac potissimum discat quæ ad docendi munus sunt accommodatissima. Id. p. 92, 93.

way. You may sometimes be, *nescio quid meditans nugarum*, but do not be *totus in illis**.

To an acquaintance with books join the study of human nature. Your own heart, passions, temper, humour, habits, and dispositions, will be the books you have most need to consult on this subject†. For human nature, in the main strokes of it, is much the same in all the human species‡. Next to this, your observations on the ways and characters and tempers of men, will be of great help to you; together with some books where human nature is strongly and finely painted, in its various shapes and appearances.

It is not beneath the Christian philosopher to take some pains to be acquainted with the world; or the humours, manners, forms, ceremonies, characters, and customs of men: at least so far as is necessary to avoid singularity and a disagreeable awkwardness, and to preserve a decorum and an easy address in all company.

A student should not think any thing unworthy his attention and notice, that has a tendency either to make him more agreeable or more useful to others. Some regard is therefore due to dress, be-

* Hor. Sat. l. 1. s. 9.

† Vid. Self-knowledge, part i. chap. 9—11.

‡ Les hommes sont à-peu-pres tous faits de la même maniere; et ainsi ce qui nous a touché, les touchera aussi.—Ostervald de l'exercice du Ministére, p. 134.

haviour,

haviour, the usual forms of civility, and whatever contributes to the art of pleasing. Among these, I would particularly recommend a habit of expressing his sentiments freely and properly upon any subject. Let his style and language be studied principally with this view.

As to the method of studying to advantage.

Pray for a divine blessing on your studies; that God would guide you into the most useful knowledge and all important truths; direct your subjects, and assist your meditations upon them.

Procure a collection of the best and most approved books, which treat of the sciences you chiefly desire to cultivate, and make yourself master of them in the way before prescribed.

Consult your own genius and inclination in the study you intend to pursue: You will else row against the tide, and make no progress that is either comfortable or creditable to yourself.

Compose your spirits, fix your thoughts, and be wholly intent on the subject in hand. Never pretend to study whilst the mind is not recovered from a hurry of cares, or the perturbations of passion.—Such abrupt and violent transitions is a discipline to which it will not easily submit, especially if it has not been well managed and long accustomed to it. *Aurora musis amica, necnon vespera:* because the mind is then commonly most free and disengaged. Let the scene of your studies be a place of silence

silence and solitude; where you may be most free from interruption and avocation.

When you have a mind to improve a single thought, or to be clear in any particular point, do not leave it until you are master of it. View it in every light. Try how many ways you can express it, and which is the shortest and best. Would you enlarge upon it; hunt it down from author to author; some of which will suggest hints concerning it, which perhaps never occurred to you before; and give every circumstance its weight. Thus by being master of every subject as you proceed, though you make but a small progress in reading, you will make a speedy one in useful knowledge. To leave matters undetermined, and the mind unsatisfied in what we study, is but to multiply half notions, introduce confusion, and is the way to make a pedant, but not a scholar.

Go to the fountain-head. Read original authors, rather than those who translate or retail their thoughts. It will give you more satisfaction, more certainty, more judgment, and more confidence, when those authors are the subjects of conversation, than you can have by taking your knowledge of them at second-hand. It is trusting to translations, quotations, and epitomes, that makes so many half scholars so impertinently wise.

Finally. Be patient of labour. The more you accustom yourself to laborious thinking, the better

you

you will bear it. But take care the mind be not jaded*.

If divinity be your peculiar study, observe the following rules.

1. Be critically expert in the original scriptures of the bible, and read a chapter in Hebrew, and another in Greek, every day. Especially observe the different senses in which the same original word is used by the same author: this often throws a great light on his meaning.

2. When you have found what you take to be your author's own sense, keep to that, and admit of no vague, uncertain, or conjectural constructions, whatever doctrine they may discountenance or favour.

3. Be sure to make the sacred scripture the source, standard, and rule, of all your theological sentiments. Take them from it, bring them to it, and try them by it.

4. Make yourself master of some short, well

* Socrates ille non hominum modo, verum etiam Apollinis oraculo, sapientissimus judicatus, et perennis Philosophiæ Fons, dicere solet: "Radicem quidem eruditionis peramarum esse, sed fructum habere jucundissimum; initioque magnos adferre labores, sed honestissimum sudantibus præmium reponere." Ergô, O tu, quisquis es, cui ignea vis in pectore exarsit, cui flamma in præcordiis micat, procul absint mollia, lenia, facilia, blanda, quæ animi impetum extinguere solent. Dura petamus, &c. Vid. Ringelbergius de Ratione Studii, p. 13.

chosen

chosen system of divinity, for the sake of method and memory; but take care *(nullius in verbum jurare magistri)* that you be not swayed by the credit of any human names in matters of divine faith. Let reason, evidence, and argument, be the only authorities to which you submit. Remember it is truth you seek; and seek her (as you would do any thing else) in the place where she is most likely to be found.

5. Divest yourself as much as possible of all prepossession in favour of, or prejudice against, any particular party-names and notions. Let the mind be equally balanced, or it will never rightly determine the weight of arguments. Prejudice in one scale will outweigh much solid truth in the other: and under such a prepossession, the mind only observes which balance preponderates, not what it is that turns it*.

6. Cultivate a proper sense of the imbecility of the human mind, and its proneness to error, both in yourself and others. This will guard you against a dogmatical confidence in defence of your own opinions, and arm you against the influence of it in others. On the contrary, endeavour after a meek, humble, teachable temper; which, from the high-

* Here I may be permitted to recommend the careful perusal of Dr. Watts's chapter on Prejudices, which forms a useful and valuable part of his treatise on Logic. T.

est

est authority, we are sure, is the best disposition of mind to seek and receive divine truth*.

7. Be not fond of controversy †. Theological altercations have in all ages been the bane of real religion, and

* Ps. xxv. 9.

† The worthy author's censure of religious controversy, though many melancholy facts may have given too just ground for it, is lax and indiscriminate. Controversy, it should be observed, may be conducted without the spirit of acrimony, or the jealousy and bitterness of altercation. If it mean a fair statement of arguments on both sides of a question, in order to investigate truth, so far from being censurable, it is commendable, and even necessary, to come to correct and just conclusions. "It is to such controversies," observed a judicious writer, (Dr. Disney), "as engaged the pens of Clarke, Hoadly, and Sykes, that we owe much of what is most valuable and dear to us." "If no disputes," says bishop Pearce, "had ever been raised in the christian church, there is great reason to think that less of truth would have been preserved in it, than there is to be found at present." Mr. Mason's unguarded censure goes to suppress enquiry, and to prevent discussion. Free, candid discussion detects errors, whets the mental powers, opens the mind, restores the purity of religion, and leads to a rational conviction of its truth and doctrines. A minister owes it to the gospel which he is to preach, if he would "keep the commandment pure and undefiled: he owes to truth, if he would be its faithful advocate, to study carefully the evidences of the dogmas which have passed, in the christian world, as the doctrines of christianity. However it may not be right to give to his sermons the air of polemical divinity, it is necessary

and the fatal source of unknown mischief to true christianity. It sours the temper, confounds the judgment, excites malevolence, foments feuds, and banishes love from the heart: and, in fine, is the devil's most successful engine to depreciate and destroy the principles of vital piety. Let the controversies you read be the most important, viz. those against the Deists and Papists. And read only the best authors upon them. Among whom you will find none to exceed the late bishop of London and Dr. Leland in the former, and Dr. Tillotson and Chillingworth in the latter.

sary, if he would preach with accuracy and precision, if he would enlighten the minds of his hearers, and appeal to their judgment and convictions, to form himself, and to lay before others clear and decided opinions on controverted points.—Caution ought not to degenerate into dissimulation, nor moderation into an indifference to truth, nor candour into lukewarmness. Whatever evils may have arisen from religious controversy, there is no occasion to consider it as "the devil's engine," or to ascribe them to the craft of a supposed invisible spirit, when the real causes of them have been visible and open; namely, the force of habit and prejudice, human passions, and the connection of worldly emoluments and power, with the profession of particular doctrines. Besides, it is an odd supposition, that the devil, according to the ideas entertained of him, as "the father of lies," should employ as an engine of his malevolence what, eventually, assists to ascertain and fix the truth. See "A Review of the Life, &c. of the Rev. John Biddle," section 13. T.

8. Avoid

8. Avoid theological minutenesses. Lay no stress on trifles; as you see many do, either from a wrong education, or a weak turn of mind. Reserve your zeal for the most important subjects, and throw it not away upon little things.

Lastly. Let none but the best writers in divinity be your favourites. Those are the best writers, who at once discover a clear head and a good heart, solid sense and serious piety; where faith and reason, devotion and judgment, go hand in hand.

CHAP. IV.

THE METHOD OF COLLECTING AND PRESERVING USEFUL THOUGHTS FROM CONVERSATION.

WHENEVER it can be done without affectation and pedantry, turn the conversation on the subject you have been reading last, if you know it to be suitable to your company; and introduce your maturest observations upon it. This will fix it in your memory,

mory, especially if it becomes matter of debate*. For the mind is never more tenacious of any principles, than those it has been warmly engaged in the defence of. And in the course of such debate you may perhaps view them in a new light, and be able to form a better judgment of them, and be excited to examine them with more care. Intercourse awakens the powers, whets the mind, and rubs off the rust it is apt to contract by solitary thinking. The pump for want of use, grows dry, or keeps its water at the bottom, which will not be fetched up unless more be added.

When you have talked over the subject you have read, think over what you have talked of; and perhaps you will be able to see more weight in the sentiments you opposed, than you were willing to admit in the presence of your antagonist. And if you suspect you was then in an error, you may now retract it without fear of mortification. That you may at once improve and please in conversation, remember the following rules.

1. Chuse your company, as you do your books: and to the same end. The best company, like the best books, are those which are at once improving

* Quicquid didiceris id confestim doceas; sic et tua firmare, et prodesse aliis potes.——Ea doce quæ noveris, eaque diversis horis, aliis atque aliis conveniet inculcare. Satis sit, si quispiam te audiat, interea exercitio miram rerum copiam tibi comparaveris. Ringel. de ratione Studii, p. 28, 56.

and entertaining*. If you can receive neither pleasure nor profit from your company, endeavour to furnish it for them. If this cannot be done, (and especially if there be danger of receiving hurt from them,) quit them, as decently as you can.

2. Study the humour of your company, and their character. If they be your superiors, or much inclined to talk, be an attentive hearer. If your inferiors, or more disposed to hear, be an instructive speaker.

3. When the conversation drops, revive it with some general topic, by starting a subject on which you have some good things to say, or you know others have. To which end, it will not be amiss to be a little prepared with topics of conversation suitable to the company you are going into: and the course of your own thoughts in conversation will be more free, than you ordinarily find them to be in silent meditation.

4. When any thing occurs that is new, or instructive, or that you are willing to make your own, enter it down in your minute or common-place book, if you cannot trust your memory, (for in conversation all are free-booters; whatever you lay your hand on that is worth keeping, is lawful prize), but take care that you do not charge either the one or the other with trash.

* Ille tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci.
Hor. de Arte Poet. l. 343.

5. Never

5. Never stand for a cypher in company, by a total silence. It will appear boorish and awkward, and give a check to the freedom of others. It is ill manners. Better say a trivial thing than nothing at all. Perhaps you hear a deal of impertinence uttered by some in the company, which you candidly excuse: presume upon their candour, if you happen to talk in the same manner. You have a right to claim it: you will readily receive it.—Something trite and low, uttered with an easy, free, obliging air, will be better received than entire silence; and indeed than a good sentiment delivered in a stiff, pedantic, or assuming manner. And many good things may arise out of a common observation. However, after a dead silence, it will set the conversation a going; and the company, who want to be relieved from it, will be obliged to you. This is a secret that will never fail to please.

6. Join not in the hurry and clamour of the talk, especially when a trifling point is disputed, and several speak at once; but be a patient hearer, till you have made yourself master of the subject and the arguments on both sides. And then you may possibly find an opportunity to put in as mediator, with credit to your judgment.

Repeat not a good thing in the same company twice, unless you are sure you are not distinctly heard the first time.

7. Though you may safely animadvert upon, yet do not oppose, much less rally, the foibles or

mistakes of any one in the company, unless they be very notorious, and there be no danger of giving offence. But remember that he himself sees the matter in a different light from what you do, and with other eyes.

8. If detraction or profaneness mingle with the conversation, discountenance it by a severe or a resolute silence, where reproof would be thought indelicate. If this be not sufficient to put a stop to it, make no scruple to withdraw *.

9. Affect not to shine in conversation, especially before those who have a good opinion of their own understanding. The surest way to please them, is to give them opportunity to shew their parst; a monopoly of this kind will scarce ever be endured with patience †.

* Possidonius relates of St. Austin, that this Latin distich was inscribed on the table where he entertained his friends:

Quisquis amat dictis absentem ridere amicum,
Hanc mensam indignam noverit esse sibi.

† Conversation is a sort of commerce, towards which every one ought to furnish his quota; i. e. to hear and speak in his turn. It is acting against the rules of honesty, and laws of commerce, to monopolize all, and deprive others of the share they have in the gain. It is, in like manner, a kind of injustice in those who compose the circle, always to usurp the talk. If your design by it is to make a shew of your parts, and to procure esteem, you quite mistake your interest; for you exasperate those against you whom you thus force to silence, who cannot bear the ascendant you give yourself, and the degree of superiority you assume. Reflect. upon Ridicule, vol. i. p. 55.

10. Bear

10. Bear with the impertinence of conversation. Something may be learned from them, or some opportunity may be given you to put in a sentiment more *a-propos*. Besides, what appears low and flat to you, may not to another*.

Lastly. Appear perfectly free, friendly, well-pleased, easy, and unreserved. This will make others so; and draw out many a good thought from them: and is much more pleasing than a studied politeness, and all the usual arts of common-place civility†.

* That which makes common conversation so nauseous, are the applauses bestowed on follies. Narrow souls admire every thing, and cry up the least trifles that ought to be let pass. That which becomes a well-bred man on these occasions is, to say nothing. It would be a criminal complaisance to applaud offensive fooleries. It would be likewise a faulty delicacy to bear with nothing but what is exquisite, and to express contempt for every thing that is flat and trivial. Id. p. 340.

† However it is extolled, as the great art of conversation, to appear with the utmost openness and civility, when you are most upon the reserve: yet, as it is not only the ordinary dress of courtiers and travellers, but an art that frequently belongs to the shops, the covering is much more transparent than they who act under it are apt to think. And besides, such an address is really nauseous amongst friends; and the greatest masters of this artful smoothness seldom deceive others thereby, so much as themselves. Vid. Advice to a Son, p. 31.

CHAP. V.

CONCERNING THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR THOUGHTS WHEN ALONE.

A STUDENT (like a philosopher) should never be less alone than when alone. Then it is that, (if it be no this own fault,) he may enjoy the best of company.

Next to the regulation of the appetites and passions, the most important branch of self-government is the command of our thoughts; which, without a strict guard, will be as apt to ramble, as the other to rebel. The great difficulty will be to keep them fixed and steadily employed upon your subject. To this end let the mind be calm and dispassionate—view your theme in every light—collect your best thoughts upon it—clothe those thoughts in words, and consider how Mr. Addison, Mr. Melmoth, or any other writer you admire, would express the same—guard against a vagrancy or dissipation of your thoughts—recal them when they

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are rambling, and observe by what connexion of ideas or images they are enticed away from their work, and refix them more diligently—if you have a pen and ink at hand, set down your best sentiments on paper—if your subject be of a religious nature, it may not be amiss to recollect some proper text of scripture, as a standard to which you may recal your vagrant forces.

Let the matter of your meditations be something seasonable, important, or entertaining. Consult the temper your mind is in, or ought to be in at that time; and let your subject be suitable to it.

Take care that nothing vain or vicious steal into your mind when alone. Hereby you make yourself a very bad companion to yourself; and become your own tempter.

If the place or occasion will admit it, think *vivâ voce*, or utter your thoughts aloud.

In your evening meditations, go over in your mind the best things you have read or heard that day, and recollect them the next morning*.

The great advantage of being alone is, that you may chuse your company; either your books, your friend, your God, or yourself. There is another will be ready to intrude, if not resolutely repelled. By the turn of your thoughts you may detect his

* Id quoque perutile fuerit, ante somnum notare quæcunque luce eâ peracta sunt. Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 110.

entrance,

entrance, and by what passage he stole in. You may know him by his cloven foot. And you have the best precept, exemplified by the best precedent, how to eject him*.

If books be your subject, or what you lately read and laid up in your memory; your mental employment will be recollection and judgment. Recollection, to recal to your mind the good things you have read; and judgment, to range them under their proper class: And to consider upon what occasion, or in what company it may be proper or useful to produce them.

If you chuse a friend for the companion of your solitude, let it not be merely for your own pleasure. But consider in what manner you may improve or entertain him. Or what it is you would learn from him; and in what manner you may best behave towards him the next time you come into his company.

When you desire to have the great GOD for the object of your contemplation, (as you should always do in your religious retirements), your mind cannot be too serious, composed, and free. Now

* See James iv. 7, compared with Matt. iv. 10.

Here it may be proper to refer the reader, who has not considered the question concerning the existence, power, and influence of the devil, to "An Inquiry into the Scripture Meaning of the word 'Satan.'" 1772. Mr. Simpson, on the words Satan, Διαβολος, &c. T.

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it is that the thoughts will be most apt to revolt and ramble: and the utmost efforts must be used to guard and guide them. Two things in this case you should never forget.

1. Earnestly implore his help, that you may think not only steadily, but worthily of him.

2. Consider him as present with you; and as witness to all the employment of your mind.

Lastly. If you are your own companion, and self-meditation be your business, you have a large field before you*. But one thing be sure not to neglect, viz. sharply and impartially to reprove yourself, in case of any observable failure; and resolve to amend your conduct in that particular, especially when the same circumstances recur.

* See Self-Knowledge, part iii. chap. 1.

END OF PART I.

THE PASTOR.

PART II.

THE business of a Pastor is to do all he can to promote the eternal interest of the souls of men. And to keep his eye continually on this, the great object of the sacred office, will be a good direction to him in the prosecution of it.

He is now to improve, regulate, digest, and apply that stock of knowledge he has taken so much pains to acquire; and examine what part of it will be most helpful to him in his great design.

The duties of the pastor's office may be comprised under the six following general heads:

Preaching. Praying. Administering the seals. Visiting the sick. His conduct towards his people in general. And towards persons of different characters in particular.

1. Preaching.

1. Preaching. This may be divided into two parts—Preparation and Elocution.

1. Preparation. Which consists of composition, and the duties immediately previous to preaching.

CHAP I.

OF COMPOSING OF SERMONS.

"BESIDES all the usual academical preparations, the study of languages, sciences, divinity, &c. there is a particular art of preaching to which, if ministers did more seriously apply themselves, it would extremely facilitate that service, and make it more easy to themselves, and more profitable to their hearers*." For acquiring which art, the rules laid down in this and the three following chapters may be helpful to those who are entering upon the sacred employment.

* Wilkin's Ecclesiastes b. 1.

1. The

1. The first thing to be considered, is the choice of the subject. Here you must consult your own genius, taste, and abilities; and choose those subjects which have most impressed your own mind; for on those you are most likely to succeed, and to produce the most mature and useful sentiments.—Consult also the temper, taste, and capacities of your audience. For the more suitable your subject style, and sentiments are to them, the more likely you will be both to please and improve them. And therefore a minister should never fix, nor chuse to preach amongst a people, whose opinions are widely different from his own. "Let the most useful and pertinent subjects be your most frequent choice.—Those are the most useful, which are the most edifying; and those most pertinent, that are most fitted to the capacities and necessities of the auditory. To both which you ought to have a special regard*". If you are at a loss for a text, consult the contents of the several volumes of sermons you have by you. That a man may form himself to preaching, he ought to take some of the best models, and try what he can do on a text handled by them without reading them; and then compare his with theirs. This will more sensibly and without putting him to the blush, model him to imitate, or, if he can, to excel the best authors†. Whatever parti-

* Barecroft's Ars Concionandi, p. 92.

† Burnetts Past. Care, p. 226, 227.

cular

cular text strikes your mind with more than common force, in the course of your reading or meditating the scriptures, pen it down with some useful strictures that may occur to you, for the foundation of a future work. By this means, you will have a good supply of suitable texts at hand;---a sermon should be made for a text, and not a text found out for a sermon. For, to give our discourses weight, it should appear that we are led to them by our text. Such sermons will probably have much more effect than a general discourse to which a text seems only to be added as a decent introduction, but to which no regard is had in the progress of it*. Affect not an obscure, difficult, or barren text, to shew your ingenuity in throwing light upon it, or set others a wondering what you can make of it. Discourses from such texts must be either unprofitable or unnatural†.

2. Having chosen your subject, your next care is to be furnished with a store of useful and pertinent thoughts upon it. Having fixed your spot on which to build, you are now to prepare materials. To this purpose, carefully peruse your text, both in the original and different translations. Attend to its

* Id. p. 280.

† Id. et Ibid. Many will remember the text that remember nothing else; therefore such a choice should be made as may at least put a weighty and speaking sentence of the scriptures upon the memories of the people. Id. p. 217.

connexions

connexions and reference; and observe what is the principal subject it points to. Collect from your concordance, or common-place book to the bible, or from Mr. Clark's Annotations, or from Wilson's Christian's Dictionary, and others, all its parallel places, or the several scriptures that have a reference to it. Pen them down on loose paper, to be properly interwoven into the discourse under any particular head or branch of it. Consult other authors on the same subject. Use their thoughts, but not their words, unless you quote them expressly; which should never be done, unless your author be a writer of eminence, and of good repute with your audience. And let it be a sentiment so weighty and well expressed, as deserves to be remembered by them; and then they will remember it the sooner as coming from him, than from yourself.

3. Having thus provided materials, form your plan. Let your method, as well as your subject, flow from your text. Let the division be easy and natural, and such as the audience would expect.--- "Let it arise from the subject itself; and give a light and just order to the several parts. Such a division, as may easily be remembered, and at the same time help to connect and retain the whole. In fine, a division that shews at once the extent of the subject, and of all its parts*." Avoid a tedious mul-

* Cambray's Dialogues on Eloquence, p. 9.

tiplication

tiplication of particulars under every general head of your discourse. Let your particular heads be not only few, but distinct; and affect not to conceal the number and order of them, if they be distinct and natural, as some modern preachers do. It is a false delicacy to aim at reducing a sermon to the form of a polite harangue*. The other method of expressing

* "Of late years it has been much the fashion to have no distinct divisions, but to deliver what is said in the desultory form of an Essay. To whatever causes the custom is owing, I cannot, for several reasons, universally or even generally approve of it in the pulpit. The ablest Rhetoricians of antiquity have given no sanction to the mode in question. Method, according to *them*, was a capital object of consideration; and it appears from all which they have advanced upon it, that they expected it to be visible. On such a supposition their rules are founded; and could not otherwise have been usually put into practice. For this I may appeal to the principal writers upon Eloquence, from Aristotle down to Quintilian. Agreeably to the precepts of the best rhetoricians, was the practice of the best orators; and particularly of the two luminaries, Demosthenes and Cicero: who frequently, who generally lay down their scheme in a distinct manner. Even where they have not done this, the nature of the antient oratory rendered their method apparent. Their discourses, according to the stated laws of composition, must consist of an exordium, a proposition of the subject, a confirmation, and a conclusion, not to mention the narration and confutation; and they did not think of hiding these several parts, which were known and expected."

"His,

expressing the number of the heads in their proper order, is not only more pleasing to the common sort of hearers, but a help to their understanding

"His, (i. e. the Christian preacher's) usual business is to promote a regular course of instruction and edification. Reason and the affections are to go hand in hand together, in whatever is delivered from the pulpit. The important and glorious truths of the gospel are to be continually urged, in order to influence the temper and regulate the life. Here then two or three commodious divisions become exceedingly proper, as resting-places to the soul, as affording materials which it can digest and rest upon for its private improvement. Hence will our congregations receive substantial benefit: whereas vague essays and declamations leave few traces in the mind, and make little or no impression upon the heart." Dr. Kippis's at Bridport, 10th July. 1768, p. 17—20.

"*Sermons* are now no more. Loose, disjointed *Essays* are all the fashion. *Well!* were I the *only clergyman* in *England*, who preached a *divided* sermon, I would persevere and glory in my singularity. No hearer, be he ever so acute, can give a satisfactory account, (as Dean TUCKER justly observes) of these *fashionable, modern* essays. I will go a step farther. Was the best and *most regularly divided* sermon to be preached without saying 1st, 2d, 3d, *general* heads, it would be almost impossible to have a clear idea of it.

"Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, in his directions to a clergyman, concerning the composition of a sermon, very properly observes, that 'divisions not only help the memory of the hearer, but direct the judgment of the writer; they supply sources of invention, and keep every part in its proper place.' Sir James Stonehouse's "Letters," p. 342—344; and also Lawson's "Lectures on Oratory," p. 383. T.

and

and memory; which a preacher should by all means carefully regard*. "It will be proper to draw your method or plan, on a loose piece of paper laid before you, with the several particulars under their respective general heads; and whatever place of scripture, or inferences, &c. you meet with in reading or meditating, pertinent to any particular point you shall speak to, you may then place them under that particular: For all things may not come to your mind at once, and a thought is so quickly gone (let your memory be almost ever so tenacious and retentive) that you will hardly retain it, unless it be in this manner committed to paper. And whatever place of scripture you make use of, which you do not well understand, consult the ablest commentators on that passage for the meaning of it; that you may not apply it to a wrong sense†."

4. Having thus provided materials, and formed your plan, begin the superstructure, which will now be raised and adorned with great ease, and be continually improving upon your hands. For no man

* It is but a bad rule in Alsted, (at least for vulgar auditories) when he advises to conceal and alter the method for variety's sake. *Crypsis dispositionis tollit fastidium auditoris.*— This may be true of itching, curious hearers, but not of such as regard their own profit and edification. Wilk. Eccles. p. 5.

† Barecroft's Ars Conc. p. 111, 112.

can

can talk well on a subject, of which he is not entirely master*.

"In the beginning you must endeavour to gain the favour of the audience, by a modest introduction, a respectful address, and the genuine marks of candour and probity†." Let your exordium be short, modest, grave, and striking; either by proposing your method, and entering upon your subject directly; or by a few important general observations which are connected with, or naturally lead to it; or by some short unexpected remark on the words of the text‡.

In your enlargement on particulars, if you find your thoughts do not run freely on any point, do not urge them too much; this will tire and jade

* Etenim ex rerum cognitione efflorescat et redundet oportet oratio: Quæ nisi subest res ab oratore percepta et cognita, inanem quandam habet elocutionem, et ferè puerilem. Cicero de Orat. l. i. § 6.

† Cambray's Dialogues on Eloquence, p. 117.—Sed hæc adjuvant in oratore, lenitas vocis, vultus, pudoris significatio, verborum comitas. Cicero de Orat. l. ii. § 43.

‡ "It is of mighty importance, that this part, (i. e. the Introduction) should be rightly executed, and it is that in which there is most danger of failing. The best precept appears to be this. 'When you have formed your whole plan, search among your inferences for the most easy and natural one: this will furnish a good introduction: but take care that it do not afterwards appear, at least in the same light."—Lawson's Lectures on Oratory, p. 381. T.

the

the faculties too soon. But pursue your plan: better thoughts may occur afterwards, which you may occasionally insert.

Let your best sentiments stand in the beginning or end of a paragraph, and the rest in the middle, which will pass very well in good company. And let every head conclude with some striking sentence, or pertinent scripture.

As every compleat sermon resembles a little book, the method of composing the former may be the same with what Ringelbergius tells us he used in composing the latter.

"My first care, says he, is to form in my mind a perfect plan of the work before me. Then in a large tablet, or a sheet of paper, I set down the titles of the chapters, or the several heads I am to discourse on. Then I look over them to see if they have their proper place, connexion, and coherence, and alter them as I see occasion. Then, whilst my mind is still warm with the subject, I take a brief sketch of what is proper to be said under each head, which I write down on a loose piece of paper; these I afterwards transfer into my plan, and in a fair hand transcribe under their proper heads. By this means, I have the whole subject and method of the work under my eye at once. Then I every day transcribe a chapter for the press, and add, or expunge, as I go along, according as the matter requires. After this, when I see nothing deficient or redundant

redundant in the subject, I apply myself to revise the language*."

Let your application be close, fervent, and animated†. To which end, get your own heart warmed and penetrated with your subject. For however drowsy or inattentive your hearers may be in the beginning or middle of a discourse, they should be always awakened and warmed at the close. "It is oftentimes proper at the end of a discourse to make a short recapitulation, wherein the orator ought to exert all his force and skill, in giving the audience a full, clear, concise view of the chief topics he has enlarged upon‡." And let the last sentence of the sermon,

* Ringel. de Ratione Stud. p. 88, 92. Vid. Ars Concio. p. 92.

† Il ne suffit pas de savoir d' où il faut tirer les usages; il est necessaire de connoître le but qu'on doit se proposer dans une application. Or ce but, c'est d'émouvoir, de toucher ses auditeurs, de leur inspirer les sentimens de piété, d'amour de Dieu, de charité, &c. Ost. de l'exercise, p. 126.

‡ Cambray's Dialogues, p. 118.

The amiable Bishop of Clogher, Dr. Clayton, laments, that in those great divines, BARROW, TILLOTSON, ATTERBURY, CLARKE, MARSHALL, and SHERLOCK, there "is not a peroration void of reasoning, and full of pathetic, warm addresses to the heart, whenever the subject will admit of it: and yet," says he, "this should be in them, in my opinion, to make them answer the end they were intended for, because the bulk of mankind are to be wrought upon in religion, not by

mon, be either your text, or some pertinent scripture, or some weighty thought well expressed and worth remembering.

5. Having thus raised your superstructure on the plan proposed, you must put the finishing hand to the work, by decently adorning it: Which is the business of a revisal, wherein you are to re-examine the method, matter and style.

1. The method. Here perhaps you may see some small alterations necessary; e. g. this head may come in more naturally before that; such a sentiment will shine to more advantage at the conclusion of a paragraph; and this particular head is not sufficiently distinct from that, and therefore both had better be wrought into one.

2. With regard to the matter. Such a sentiment is expressed before, therefore strike it out here; too much is said upon this part of the sub-

by arguments of reason to inform their judgment or understanding, but by talking to their passions to move the heart. For do not you, does not every body know, that the people of this age want less to be taught their duty, than to be persuaded to discharge it? And if the heart is not warmed in a discourse upon religion, it will never be persuaded to put it in practice." Advice from a Bishop, 1759. P. 87.

For some useful hints and rules, on an application to the hearers, by way of *Inferences*, see Lawson's "Lectures on Oratory", 398—400. T.

if

ject, too little upon that; add here, retrench there; if any new thought, or pertinent scirpture occur to your mind, search out the proper place where to dispose of it.

3. With regard to your style. This thought is obscurely expressed, explain it; this sentence is equivocal, be more determinate; this is too long, shorten it; here is a jingle, correct it; this disposition of the words is harsh and hard to be pronounced, alter it; this expression is too mean and vulgar, substitute a better *.

I shall conclude this chapter with the following general rules relating to the style of the pulpit.

1. Let it be plain, proper and perspicuous; and then the shorter it is, the better. A concise, full and nervous style is always most striking, therefore most pleasing. To obscure and weaken the sense by a studied ornament, or flow of words, is wrong oratory, and nauseous to every one of true taste.

"The words in a sermon must be simple and in common use, not savouring of the schools, or above the understanding of the people. All long periods, such as carry two or three different thoughts in them must be avoided; for few hearers can follow

* Equidem in libris excudendis, cum speciosum aliquem vocum contextum, aut verba duo, ornata invenio, lætitia exulto majore, quam si aureum reperissem. Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 111, 112.

or

or apprehend these. Niceties of style are lost before a common audience *."

2. Let your numbers be full and flowing. And carefully avoid all harshness and dissonance in the choice and disposition of your words: This is a part of rhetoric, which though carefully cultivated by the ancients, is too much neglected by the moderns †. "In reading over a discourse to ourselves, we must observe what words sound harsh, and agree ill together; for their is a music in speaking, as well as in singing, which a man though not otherwise critical in sounds, will soon discover ‡."

3. Observe a medium between a too short and too prolix style. The sententious style is apt to be defective. A prolix one (if the members of a long sentence be not judiciously disposed, and fraught with a weight of sentiment) tedious and disagreeable; and a low creeping style is as unbecoming the dignity of the pulpit, as a high and turgid one. There is a decency to be observed in our

* Burnet's Past. Care, p. 223.

† See treatise on Prosaic numbers———Numeros equidem vitam vocaverim orationis; quod haud obscurè apparebit, si sententiam numerosam solveris, iisdem servatis et transpositis verbis. Quippe quæ ante efficax erat, ea soluta ridicula videbitur; quamobrem in omni opere, prima curarum esse debet, ut res sive membra cohereant; proxima, ut verba, seu modulatio numerorum. Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 92, 93.

‡ Burnet's Past. Care, p. 236.

language,

language, as well as our dress *: With regard to both a prudent man will consider, not only what is decent in itself, but what is most so at certain times †.

4. An illustration of your subject by sensible images, and apt similies, will always be agreeable.

Lastly. Let the conclusion of your periods be harmonious, and your concluding thoughts the most memorable ‡.

See more on this subject, part II. c. 4.

CHAP. II.

* Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable.
A low conceit in pompous words express'd,
Is like a clown in royal purple dress'd;
For different styles with different subjects sort,
As several garbs, with country, town and court.
Some by old words to fame have made pretence,
Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense;
Such labour'd nothings in so strange a style,
Amaze th' unlearned, make the learned smile.

POPE's Essay on Criticism.

† Omnique in re, posse quod deceat facere, artis et naturæ est; scire quid quandoque deceat, prudentiæ. Cic. de Orat. l. 3. §. 55.

‡ Elocutio partibus quatuor consummatur. Primum enim si res tractetur magnifica, caveo nè particula usquàm jaceat humi, infra dignitatem orationis—tum etiam video nè verbum

CHAP. II.

GENERAL RULES RELATING TO PREACHING.

1 IT were advisable for young preachers to pen down every sentence of their sermons in short-hand; and

bum idem, aut syllaba, si fieri possit, bis ponatur—ad hæc do operam, ut numerorum gratia, sive concentus cohæreat, aut per omnes periodi partes, aut saltêm in fine—Postrema cura est, nè multi sint fines sententiarum, qui pedes easdem habeant. Ringel. de Rat. Stud. p. 90, 91.

In addition to this chapter, some remarks of the late Dr. Kippis, on the subjects of pulpit discourses, may be properly added. "The subjects of our discourses ought to be the great doctrines, duties, examples, assistances, promises and prospects of the gospel; I say, the great doctrines, duties, examples, assistances, promises and prospects of the gospel; for it should never be forgotten by us, that we are preachers of the Christian religion; and it is strange that this should ever be forgotten by any who actually believe in the revelation of our blessed Saviour. The New Testament contains the whole display of the love of the only true God,

and trust nothing to their memories * until they are masters of a free, fluent, and proper style; and have

the father to the degenerate children of Adam. It exhibits all the compassion and tenderness of Jesus. It holdeth forth a knowledge of the purest and noblest kind; it conveys to us the pardon of our sins; it communicates the principles of holiness; it inspires us with resignation and fortitude; and it spreads before us a boundless happiness. These mighty blessings it gives to creatures who were absolutely unworthy of them; to creatures who were involved in ignorance and transgression, who had no hope, who were liable to final condemnation. It rescues us from the most deplorable of all calamities, and confers upon us the greatest possible

* "As light a matter as it may be thought by other people, and probably may be by you, yet I am positive it is a matter of consequence," observes Bp. Clayton, "that sermons should be written in a large and fair hand, without crowding the words and the lines into one another. For by this means, if you take the pains in reading it often over, which you ought to take, the least glance of the eye, as you turn from one side of your congregation to the other, will enable you to go on without appearing to read at all. But this management not only gives you the reputation of preaching almost without notes which the common people admire much, but is what will greatly recommend you to men of the first ability, as it enables you also to give the force and beauty of elocution to what you say, and to adorn it with the energy and the grace of action; and though theatrical action is unseemly in so grave a character as a preacher's yet there is an action as proper to the pulpit, as that is to the stage." "Advice from a Bishop to a young clergyman." P. 59, 90. T.

have acquired a good command of their spirits, a free utterance, and a maturity of sentiments. Then they

possible felicity. Eternal death was our expected portion; but eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. In communicating these benefits, the wisdom, truth, rectitude, and goodness of our heavenly Father are admirably portrayed, and the benevolence of the blessed Redeemer shines in full beauty and lustre. It shines in a thousand affecting situations and instances resulting from his actions, discourses, sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension. All these must be acknowledged, whatever particular system of opinions we embrace, provided we do actually believe in the supernatural original and authority of our holy religion. In every view of the matter, Christianity is to be regarded as an inestimable gift, as a pearl of unspeakable price. To be afraid therefore, of expressing ourselves in the highest terms concerning the mercy of God in the gospel; not to draw from the New Testament our principal instructions, arguments and motives, is treason against our great master. We may lawfully make use of other assistances; we may select materials from various sources: nor is it necessary to be always introducing the name of Christ. But we must stand up in the pulpit as his ministers. His truths, his laws, his life, his sanctions, we must display; upon his compassion and philanthropy we must insist, and speak under the powerful impression of that immortal salvation by him communicated." Charge at Bridport. p. 21—23.

It is a recommendation of the strain of preaching delineated in the preceding paragraph, that it is not only obligatory on the Christian preacher; but it is popular and authoritative. It is *popular*, because it turns on topics, which are in themselves very affecting and impressive, and which

they may venture to leave something to the memory, by writing half sentences, 'till by degrees they are able to trust to it a good part of the enlargement under every head. This will be no great burden, provided they take care to be thoroughly masters of their notes, before they go up into the pulpit; and will be a great help to a free, decent and natural elocution.

I would not advise any young minister, though ever so happy in a strength of memory, entirely to lay aside his notes; it can answer no valuable end, and the inconveniences of it are these;—the thoughts may possibly wander; in that case you are bewildered without a guide: This reflection will

are familiar to, and therefore easily apprehended by all hearers who are conversant with the New Testament; which it will also assist them to read with improving understanding and interest. It is *authoritative*, for it directs the attention of the hearer from the opinion, authority and reasonings of the preacher, to the divine oracles and to our heavenly master, Christ. Be it added, that it is truly evangelical to bring under constant review and consideration the divine mission of Jesus, and the benefits it hath entailed on the human race; and to represent all, as flowing from the pure benevolence, and redounding to the glory of the ONE GOD and FATHER of all. On these topics the UNITARIAN scheme not only allows, but invites the preacher to dwell, as forming its leading and fundamental principles; namely, GOD the FATHER, the first cause, and Jesus, the Christ, the great medium, instrument and agent of all the truths, mercy and hopes of the gospel. T.

create

create a confusion and perplexity in the mind, which the hearers will observe with pain; and you will scarcely ever be able to recover the right tract in that hurry of spirits without many a trip and much trouble: This will throw a tremor, at least a diffidence on the mind, which will make it difficult to resume your wonted courage. Besides, when so much attention is bestowed on the memory, you will be apt to pay too little to the judgment and affections. You will not have leisure to observe how much your own heart is affected, or how you may best affect that of your hearers; who are never more pleased, than when they see their preacher composed, free, and deeply impressed with his own subject; and never more disgusted, than when they observe him confused, bewildered, or unattentive to what he himself delivers. Besides, the inaccuracy of diction, the inelegance, poverty and lowness of expression, which is commonly observed in extemporaneous discourses, will not fail to offend every hearer of good taste.

2. Go to the bottom of your subject; and think of every thing that ought to be said upon it: and consider what points, or parts of it, your hearers would be glad to have cleared up, or most enlarged upon. To skim off only the surface, is to put off your audience with froth. The weightiest sentiments often lie at bottom; be at the pains then of diving deep to bring them up from thence. On the other hand,

3. Take

3. Take care you do not torture your subject, by aiming to exhaust it. Do not endeavour to say every thing that can be said, but every thing that ought to be said upon it. A preacher's excellence is seen, not so much in saying a great deal upon a text, as saying the best things in the best manner *.

4. Do not crowd your thoughts too thick. This will but fatigue and perplex the minds of your hearers, who should always have time to follow you. If you pour water too fast into the funnel, it will run over.

5. Protract not your discourse to an undue length. The best sentiments will not be attended to, whilst your hearers are impatiently waiting and wishing for the conclusion. It were better to offend by the other extreme, provided your matter be solid, well disposed and well digested. Better leave your

* Nolim te facere, quod pravâ quadam ambitione, vulgus professorum hodiè facit, ut omni loco coneris omnia dicere, sed ea duntaxat, quæ explicando præsenti loco sint idonea; nisi siquandò, delectandi causâ, digrediendum videbitur. Erasm. de Rat. Stud. p. 186.

Un prédicateur judicieux sait parler, et se taire, il sait dire ce qu'il faut, et s'arrêter où il faut. Oster. de l'exercice du Min. p. 142.

"Learn to distinguish the precise time of concluding; that is, when you have executed the scheme at first laid down; when you have nothing new to say, nothing of more weight and force than what hath been said; when you have brought your argument to a point; while the impression is strong and still warm in the hearer's mind." Lawson's Lectures, p. 406, 407. T.

audience

audience longing than loathing. Abstinence is less hurtful than repletion. I think Mr. Luther says in his table-talk, that one necessary qualification of a preacher is, *to know when to leave off.*

6. In practical preaching (which should be your ordinary strain) remember that you preach to Christians; and let your chief motives to practice be drawn from Christian principles. "It is verily a fault in too many of the public teachers of our times, that their sermons are moral harangues generally; and Tully's Offices, and Seneca's Epistles, serve them instead of the Bible: they are furnished with nothing but moral precepts, as if they were preaching at Old Rome, or Athens, and their auditors were all infidels *."

7. Be sure to consult the capacity and understanding of your hearers. Remember you are not declaiming in the academy; but preaching to an illiterate congregation: take care then that you be not too learned, or too logical; that you do not *shoot over the heads of your hearers* (as they call it) either in your doctrine or language. Condescend to their capacities; and let it be your ambition and care whilst you are treating of the highest subjects, to be comprehended by the lowest understanding: wherein Archbishop Tillotson, Archbishop Sharp, and Dr. Sherlock will be your best patterns.——It is not easy to be conceived how

* Edward's Preacher, vol. 1. p. 73.

much

much ignorance of divine things there is in the minds of the greatest part of those you preach to.

It was the observation of a late celebrated divine in the church of Rome, "That there are always three quarters of an ordinary congregation, who do not know those first principles of religion, in which the preacher supposes every one to be fully instructed *." It is to be hoped that matters are somewhat mended in our Protestant assemblies; but still there is reason to fear, that they who compose the major part in our places of worship, are deplorably defective in their knowledge of the true doctrines of christianity. And as the subject should not be too deep for their conceptions, so neither should the style be too high for their comprehension; and therefore all scholastic terms, systematical phrases and metaphysical definitions should be for ever banished from the pulpit.

8. Affect not to shew your parts, by entering upon nice and curious disquisitions, or by a strong portrait of general characters. This is shooting beside the mark, or at least will but very seldom reach it. The chief end it will produce (and which you will be thought to aim at) is your own applause, and not your people's profit. "Too close a thread of reason, too great an abstraction of thought, too sublime and too metaphysical a strain, are suitable to

* Cambray

very

very few auditories, if to any at all *." "I love a serious preacher, who speaks for my sake, and not for his own, who seeks my salvation, and not his own vain-glory. He best deserves to be heard, who uses speech only to clothe his thoughts, and his thoughts only to promote truth and virtue. Nothing is more despicable than a professed declaimer, who retails his discourses as a quack does his medicines †."

9. Endeavour to affect your own mind with what you deliver; and then you will not fail to affect the minds of your hearers ‡. There must be a life and power in your delivery, to keep up the attention and fix the affection of them that hear you; "for artificial eloquence, without a flame within, is like artificial poetry; all its productions are forced and unnatural, and in a great measure

* Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 219——It is here that our preachers are most defective. Most of their fine sermons contain only philosophical reasonings; sometimes they preposterously quote scripture only for the sake of decency and ornament. Their sermons are trains of fine reasoning about religion, but they are not religion itself. We apply ourselves too much to the drawing of moral characters, and inveighing against the general disorders of mankind; but we don't sufficiently explain the precepts and principles of the gospel. Cambray's Dialogues, p. 100, 101.

† Cambray's letter to the French academy, p. 230.

‡ Summa, quantum ego quidem sentio, circa movendos affectus, in hoc posita est, ut moveamur ipsi. Quintilian, l. 6 c. 2.

ridiculous *." " 'Tis said of John Baptist that he was a burning and shining light, *ardere prius est, lucere posterius; ardor mentis, est lux doctrinæ,* 'Tis a hard matter to affect others with what we are not first affected ourselves †."

10. When you are called to touch upon controversy (which you should avoid as much as possible in the pulpit) be candid, clear, short and convictive. Be sure that your arguments be solid, close and strong; and your answers at least as clear as the objections: for if these be plain and those perplexed, you will but confirm the error you mean to confute ‡. Avoid all needless censures, especially of persons by name. When a censorious spirit is kindled by the preacher, nothing will sooner be catched by the hearers; and that unhallowed flame will quickly be propagated far and wide.——Dark debates in divinity are like rocks, not only steep and

* Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 223.

† Bishop Wilkin's Ecclesiastes, p. 252.

[" It is he only who *feels* with spirit, can *paint* with spirit, nor can any man communicate a passion to *others*, till he has first felt it *himself*." Fordyce's " Art of Preaching," p. 118. So the Roman poet; Horace's Art of Poetry, l. 102.

Si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi; tunc tua me infortunia lædent!
" If you would have me weep, begin the strain,
Then shall I feel your sorrows; feel your pain!"
FRANCIS. T.]

‡ See Wilkin's Eccles. p. 26.

craggy,

craggy, but barren and fruitless, and not worth the pains of climbing to the top; and what influence they have on the spirits of men, is commonly a bad one. It is scarce to be imagined what harm these theological subtilties do us. As spirits extracted from bodies are always hot, heady and inflammatory: So divine truths subtilized and too much sublimated, heat, intoxicate and discompose the minds of men, fire their tempers, and kindle very hurtful and unruly passions, to the disturbance of their own peace and that of others.

11. Let your great aim in every sermon be to please God and profit your people, to do them good rather than gain their applause. Do not covet a reputation for eloquence; it will turn you off from higher views. Besides, an excessive desire of popularity and fame will subject you to many secret vexations: As well may you expect the sea to be undisturbed, as the mind of an ambitious man to be long free from disquietude *.

Lastly. Endeavour to get the great principles of Christianity wrought into your own heart; and let them shine in your temper and conversation. "Ministers have one great advantage beyond all the rest of the world in this respect, that whereas

* Αλλ' εργαζομενος τους λογους, ως αν αρεσειε τω θεω; ει μεν επαινειτο και παρα των ανθρωπων, μη διακρειδη τα εγκομια, μη παρεχοντων δε αυτα των ακροατων, μη ζητειτω, μηδε αλγειτω. Chrysos. de Sacer. l. 5.

the

the particular callings of other men prove to them great distractions, and lay many temptations in their way to divert them from minding their high and holy calling of being christians, it is quite otherwise with the clergy; the more they follow their proper callings, they do the more certainly advance their general one; the better priests they are, they become also the better christians. Every part of their calling, when well performed, raises good thoughts, and brings good ideas into their minds, and tends both to increase their knowledge and quicken their sense of divine matters *."—Cicero, Quintilian and Horace, all made virtue a necessary qualification in a complete orator †. I am sure it is so in a christian preacher. It is required of a presbyter that he *be blameless.* Tit. i. 6. ‡. When a preacher has the great doctrines which he teaches in-wrought into his temper, and he feels the

* Burnet's Pastoral Care, chap. 8.

† Quæ (sc. eloquentia) quò major est, probitate jungenda, summâque prudentiâ; quarum virtutum expertibus si dicendi copiam tradiderimus, non eos quidèm oratores efficerimus, sed furentibus quædam arma dederimus.

Cicero de Oratore, l. 3. §. 14.

Sit ergo nobis orator, quem instituimus, is qui à M. Ciceronе finitur. Vir bonus dicendi peritus—ideòque non dicendi modò eximiam in eo facultatem, sed omnes animi virtutes exigimus. Quintilian, Lib. xii. c. 1.

Scribendi rectè sapere est et principium et fons.

Hor. de Art. Poet.

‡ In Sacerdote etiam animi vitia prohibentur.

Vide Hieronym. in loco.

influence

influence of them on his own spirit, he will reap from thence these three great advantages in his public ministrations: He will then speak from his own experience. He will with great cofidençe and assurance direct and counsel others. And will more readily gain belief to what he says *.—— Without this experimental sense of religion in the heart, and a steady practice of it in the life, all the learning in the world will not make a person, either a wise man, a good christian, or a faithful minister †. And to induce him to a wise circumspection in his conduct, he should often consider the influence his own example will have upon his people, for whom he must live, as well as for himself; and who will think themselves very justifiable if they indulge to no other liberties than such as they see their minister take himself ‡.

Before I close this chapter, let me add one thing more, viz. That a minister, both with regard to his conduct and preaching, should take care not

* Edward's preacher, vol. 1. p. 321.

† Aliud enim est scire, aliud sapere. Sapiens est, qui didicit non omnia, sed ea quæ ad veram felicitatem pertinent; et iis quæ didicit afficitur, ac transfiguratus est.

Erasm. Ecclesiastes, p. 21.

‡ Ἰφελιον εἰναι δει τον ἱερεα, και διορατικον, και μυριας ἐχοντα ὀθεν κεκτησθαι τας ὀφθαλμους, ὡς ου ἑαυτω μονον, ἀλλα και πληθει ζωντα τοσουτω.

A bishop had need be sober and vigilant, and have all his eyes about him, who lives not only for himself, but for so great a multitude of people.

Chrysostom de Sacer. I. 3. c. 12.

to

to be too much affected with common fame. Though he is not to be absolutely indifferent to the applauses and censures of others, yet he should arm himself against the bad influence of both. He must expect to pass through good report and evil report: And both are apt to make hurtful impressions on weak, unstable minds.—As to evil report, a *stoic* will tell you, that, in confidence of your innocence, you ought absolutely to despise both it and its author.

I think Chrysostom's advice is more suited to the character of a christian minister. "As for groundless and unreasonable accusations, says he, (for such a christian bishop must expect to meet with) it is not right either excessively to fear them, or absolutely despise them. He should rather endeavour to stifle them, though they be ever so false, and the author of them ever so despicable; for both a good and bad report is greatly increased by passing through the hands of the multitude, who are not accustomed to examine, but to blab out every thing they hear, whether true or false. Therefore we are not to despise them, but to nip those evil surmises in the bud, speak friendly to those who raise them, be their characters ever so bad, and omit nothing that may remove their wrong impressions of us. And if after all they persist to defame us, we may then despise them *."

* Chrysostom de Sacerdot. L. v. c. 4.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

OF THE DUTIES IMMEDIATELY PREVIOUS TO THE WORK OF THE PULPIT.

To prepare you for this service, the following directions may be useful.

1. Before you enter on the public worship of God in his house, be sure to apply yourself to the throne of grace, for a divine blessing on your labours. It was a usual saying of Mr. Luther, *Benè orasse, est benè studuisse* *. In these your previous devotions, see that your heart be very sincere and fervent†. You must pray for yourself, and pray for your people.

* Sub horum concionis ecclesiastes det se profundæ deprecationi, et ab eo postulet sapientiam, linguam, et orationis eventum, qui linguas infantium facit disertas. Incredibile dictu quantum lucis, quantum vigoris, quantum roboris & alacritatis hinc accedat ecclesiastæ. Eras. Eccles. p. 486.

†" By means of such intercourses with Heaven, you will step from your *closets* into the *pulpit* breathing a certain etherial air, and labouring with the very spirit of truth and love, which flows from the *Divinity* and tends towards him."

FORDYCE's Art of preaching, p. 298. 3d edition. T.

(1.) You

(1.) You must pray for yourself—that God would help you to bring your own Spirit into a frame suitable to the work you are about to undertake——that the word you deliver may affect your own heart, or that you may first feel the holy flame you would communicate to others—that a *door of utterance* may be opened to you, and that you may speak as becomes *the oracles of God*—that he would direct you to speak to the consciences and particular cases of your hearers, or that what you deliver, may be a word in season *—and that he would especially assist you in prayer, and give you *the spirit of grace and supplication.*

2. You are to pray for your people—that their attentions may be engaged both to the evidence and importance of the things they are to hear—that God would open their hearts to give them a fair and candid reception, and that no bad prejudice may prevent the good effect of the word—that the grace of God may co-operate with his appointed means, to set home divine truths with power on their consciences—that they may be able to retain the *good seed* that is sown—that it may bring forth it's proper fruit in their future lives—and finally, that their prayers for you, and behaviour towards you, may strengthen your hands, and make you more serviceable to their souls.

* Ad docendum divina nemo idoneus est, nisi doctus divinitûs. Id. p. 110.

3. Let

3. Let your mind and countenance be very composed and serious, and your gesture grave and decent. To this end, endeavour to bring your spirit into a religious and devout frame, before you come into the house of God. Attend to the real importance of the work you are called to, both when you are the mouth of God to the people, and when you are the mouth of the people to God. Avoid those objects, and avert those thoughts, which tend to discompose your mind, or indispose it for the sacred service you are going to engage in. Clear your heart of all vain and worldly cares, and especially of all vexatious and disturbing thoughts, before you enter on the public service of God. Endeavour to attain a spiritual, holy and heavenly frame of mind by previous prayer, reading, and devout meditation. It will render your sacred work both more agreeable and easy to yourself, and more beneficial to your hearers, if you endeavour to carry into the house of God that serious temper of mind which you desire they should carry out of it.

4. Before you enter on your work, take time to premeditate and recollect some of the most weighty, pertinent and important sentiments and expressions you may have occasion for either in prayer or preaching. This will be especially necessary, if you give any thing in charge to the memory; that you may not be at a loss for those

sentiments

sentiments when they are to be produced in their proper place. The mind should be well seasoned with the discourse before it be delivered. It is not enough to be master of your notes, but you must enter into the spirit of your subject. Call in every thing that is proper to improve it, and to raise and animate your mind in the contemplation of it*.

5. Affect your mind with the consideration of the solemnity and importance of the business you are going about; and how much may depend on a faithful execution of it. Few men had ever more natural courage than Mr. Luther, and yet he was often heard to say, that even to the latest part of his life, he never could conquer his fear when he mounted the pulpit †. And St. Chrysostom used to say, that that scripture, *They watch for your souls, as those that must give an account,* Heb. xiii. 17. struck his mind with constant awe ‡.

* "One of the two English divines whom I have mentioned in this letter, and who were the only PREACHERS I ever saw there, took as much pains he told me in writing and speaking his sermon in his study, before he preached it, as most others do in the composition; and his success was answerable." Advice from a Bishop. p. 65. T.

† Etsi jam senex, et in concionando exercitus sum, tamen timeo quoties suggestum conscendo.

Wilkin's Eccles. p. 254.

‡ Ὁ γὰρ φοβὸς ταύτης τῆς ἀπειλῆς συνεχῶς κατατείνει μου τὴν ψυχήν.

Chrysostom de Sacerdotio. l. 6.

Lastly.

Lastly. Keep up a self-command, and a becoming presence of mind; and get above a low, servile fear of men. If you are master of your subject, and come well furnished with suitable materials for their religious improvement, and produce plain scripture and reason for what you advance, you have no cause to fear either the critic or the censor; but may with modesty conclude, that you are at least as good a judge of the subject you have taken so much pains to understand and digest, as they are, who perhaps never gave it so precise or extensive a consideration*.

* "The great endeavour of every one who preaches the gospel, should be to acquire with his audience, *Authority*.—How then shall we obtain this so valuable Authority? Ye may be assured of it, by establishing a belief, that you are possest of a competent degree of knowledge, of perfect sincerity, of diligence: By composing your discourses with due care: By exact attention in the right choice of subjects; disposing them with clear method, treating them with close reason, well moderated passion and chaste fancy; by expressing your sense properly, with perspicuity and shortness; and by delivering the whole with a natural, becoming warmth and variety. And more especially if you would do good by preaching, or maintain any degree of this *Authority*, preserve a strict conformity of manners to your doctrines: Be what you recommend." Lawson's Lectures. p. 430, 431. T.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

OF PULPIT-ELOCUTION.

UNDER this phrase, I comprize the *language*, *pronunciation*, and *action* that are most becoming the pulpit.

1. The language. This must be plain, proper, pure, concise and nervous.

(1.) Let your language be plain or perspicuous *. It is a nauseous affectation to be fond of hard words, or to introduce terms of art and learning into a discourse addressed to a mixed assembly of plain, illiterate christians. The ridicule of it will appear, by supposing you were to talk to them in that manner in common conversation. They who do not understand you, will dislike you; and they who do, will see the affectation, and despise you.

* Prima est eloquentiæ virtus, perspicuitas; et quoquisque ingenio minus valet, hoc se magis attollere et dilatare conatur: ut staturâ breves in digitos eriguntur, et plura infirmi minantur. Quintilian, l. ii. c. 3.

(2.) Let

(2.) Let your words be well-chosen, proper and expressive; such as your hearers not only understand, but such as are most fit to convey the sentiments you mean.

(3.) Aim at a purity of language. To this end diversify your style, as far as it is consistent with perspicuity and propriety——Avoid the frequent and near repetition of the same word, unless it be very emphatical, and the re-iteration rhetorical ——Shun all harsh and jingling sounds—Have an eye to an easy cadence at the close of your periods, and conclude as often as you can, with an emphatical word—Avoid dubious and equivocal expressions, or such as leave the sense indeterminate—and all low, vulgar and barbarous words—Let your phrase be like your dress, decent, unaffected, and free from gaudy and studied ornaments—And, in fine, let all your art be to imitate nature.

(4.) A concise style very well becomes the pulpit: Because long periods convey not the sense either with so much ease, or force, especially to uncultivated minds. But affect not to speak in proverbs. A short, sententious style, if it be expressive, full and clear, will be always strong and universally agreeable.

(5.) Aim at a striking, nervous style, rather than a diffusive, flowing one: And let the most emphatical words convey the sublimest thoughts; and if there be a glow in the sentiment, it will seldom

seldom fail to shine in the expression *. See ch. i. *ad finem*.

2. The pronunciation.

(1.) Let this be quite free, natural and easy, "The whole art of good oratory consists in observing what nature does, when unconstrained. You should address yourself to an audience, in such a modest, respectful, and engaging manner, that each of them should think you are speaking to him in particular †." Every sort of affected tone is to be carefully avoided. Suppose your whole auditory to be but one person, and that you were speaking to him in your own parlour. And let the nature of your subject direct the modulation of your voice: Be cool in the rational, easy in the familiar, earnest in the persuasive, and warm in the pathetical part of your discourse ‡. Every passion requires a pronunciation proper to itself §.

(2.) Let the voice be always distinct, and deliberate; and give every word it's full sound. Attend

* Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.
Hor. de Art. Poet.

† Cambray's Dialogues, p. 98.

‡ "The spirit and beauty, and I may say the very essence of pronunciation, lies in proper *emphases* and accents; and in varying the *notes* and *times* pursuant to the diversity of sentiments and the occasions." Arch. HORT's Instructions to the Clergy, p. 10. T.

§ See Treatise on Elocution, p. 29.

Attend to your own voice: If it be not strong, full and clear to yourself, you may be sure it is not so to many of the audience. And to help your voice, address yourself chiefly to the remotest part of the assembly, and then they who are nearer will hear plainly enough—Let your pronunciation be very deliberate. You will be in little danger of speaking too slow, provided your voice and action and the weight of the sentiment keep up your hearers' attention.

(3.) Affect not to move the passions by a loud, clamorous voice. This is not *powerful* preaching; and argues no excellence in the preacher, but the strength of his lungs. It is unseemly in a Christian minister to imitate the priests of *Delphos*, who delivered their oracles with rage and foaming. This noisy, blustering manner shocks a delicate hearer, and degrades the dignity of the pulpit. To be a *Boanerges*, it is not necessary to become a *Stentor* *. However,

(4.) Let your voice be always lively and awakening; though at sometimes it should be more animated than at others.

(5.) Now and then a sudden change from a higher to a lower key (when something remarkable occurs) will wonderfully catch the attention. This is what Quintilian calls *Ars variandi*, which, when

* Edward's preacher, vol. i. p. 198.

when well timed, is not only graceful in itself, but pleasing to the ear, and gives no small relief to the preacher *.

(6.) Repeat sometimes the most remarkable sentences with a free, decent, easy manner.

(7.) Make a pause after some important thought. These pauses (especially near the close of a discourse) will have a very good effect; not only as they render the service more solemn, but give both yourself and your hearers time to compose and recollect; and mightily awaken their attention to what follows; which should therefore be always something worthy of it. "There are some occasions, where an orator might best express his thoughts by silence: For if being full of some great sentiment, he continue immoveable for a moment, this surprising pause will keep the minds of the audience in suspense, and express an emotion too big for words to utter †."—In a word, (as Quintilian observes) the great art of elocution is no more than a proper and natural modulation and variation of the voice, according to the nature of the subject ‡.

* Ars porro variandi, cum gratiam præbet, ac renovat aures, tum dicentem ipsâ laboris mutatione reficit.

Quintilian, l. xi. c. 3.

† Cambray's Dialogues on Eloquence, p. 89.

‡ Secundum rationem rerum, de quibus dicimus, conformanda vox est. l. xi. c. 3. Quintil.

3. The

3. The action. This must always be adapted to the pronunciation, as that to the passions. Here two extremes are to be avoided, viz. too much, and too little action.

(1.) Let not your action be too much. "We have some at home that outdo the French, and invent new ways of an apish and uncouth deportment. One is ready every moment to throw himself out of the pulpit, and the people that sit below him are in continual fear that he will be in good earnest. Another reckons up all the heads and particulars on the tips of his fingers, which he exposes to the gazing people. Others by odd and fantastic gestures of the like nature delight to give the auditors diversion, and make good the primitive use of the word *pulpit*, which was the higher part of the stage where the players and comedians acted. But our serious preacher abhors all of this kind, and never affects to be theatrical *."——

To be more particular—Your action should not be perpetual. The body or any part of it must not be in constant motion. As the preacher should not be, like the trunk of a tree, always immoveable; so neither, like the boughs of it, in continual agitation.——Nor must the motion of the body be uniform and unvaried. A steady vibrative

* Edward's Preacher, vol. 1. p. 200.

tive swing of the body from the right to the left, like the pendulum of a clock, is very unnatural and faulty. "As there is a monotony in the voice; so there is a uniformity in the gesture, that is no less nauseous and unnatural, and equally contrary to the good effect that one might expect from decent action *."—Again, your action should not be mimical. The hands should seldom stir, unless when some passion is to be expressed, or some weighty sentiment pointed out.——Nor too violent. As when it exceeds the force of the expression, and the dignity of the sentiment: A fault we often see in company among persons of a warm, impetuous temper.——Nor theatrical, pompous and affected. This becomes neither the dignity of the pulpit, nor the solemnity of the work. The chief action should be (1.) in the eyes: which should be commanding, quick and piercing; not confined to your notes, but gently turning to every part of your audience, with a modest, graceful respect. (2.) The head: Which should always regularly turn with the eyes. (3.) The hands. The right hand should have almost all the action; at least the left hand is never to be moved alone. (4.) The upper part of the body: Which should always correspond with the motion of the eyes, head and hands, and should be for the

* Cambray's Dialogues, p. 91.

the most part erect. Avoid a lazy lolling on the cushion; on which your elbows should rarely rest, and when they do (e. g. when you make a considerable pause) let it be with an easy, graceful attitude.——In a word, let all your pulpit-actions, be natural, free, decent and easy: Which by frequent practice and a careful observation of these rules, will be soon attained *.

(2.) The other extreme to be avoided is, too little action. To stand like a statue, stiff and motionless, when you are speaking to your people of the most momentous and affecting things, is as unnatural and as disagreeable as a set, uniform tone in pronunciation; and looks as if you were not in earnest yourself, and cared not whether your people were so: How singular would this appear if you were talking to a friend in private, upon any particular affair that very much concerned him, and to which you desire to excite his most earnest attention. How will your hearers be able to keep from sleeping, if they see you are scarce awake yourself.——Into this extreme the English preachers are most apt to fall, as the French into the former. But after all let it be remembered, that the end of a decent, just and lively pronunciation and action, is only to excite and fix the attention of your hearers. Let your

* See Treatise on Elocution, p. 39, and seq.

your chief care be still directed to the propriety and importance of your sentiment, and the dignity of your subject: For it will never fail to disgust your hearers, if you rouze their attention by a solemnity of voice and action, and then put them off with something low, trite or unaffecting *.

CHAP. V.

OF PRAYER.

2. THE next most considerable part of the pastoral office is prayer; which is commonly divided into the grace and gift of prayer.

1. The grace, or the spirit of prayer. This signifies either (1.) Praying with the heart and spirit,

* On the subject of pulpit elocution, as it includes both pronunciation and action, see LAWSON's Oratory, Lecture xxii. and Dr. James Fordyce's Sermon, on the Eloquence of the Pulpit, and Essay on the Action of the Pulpit. T.

spirit, with the intent engagement of all the mental powers, understanding, will, and affections. Or (2.) with the exercise of those christian graces which are proper to enkindle a devout fervour of mind in that part of worship; such as humility, self-abasement, faith, love, delight, desire, trust in God, hope and heavenly-mindedness. Or (3.) under the particular aid and influence of the Holy Spirit * who helps our infirmities, and teaches us to pray: So says the apostle, We know not what to pray for as we ought, but the spirit helpeth our infirmities, Rom. viii. 26. by composing our spirits, giving

* It is not the design of this edition of Mr. Mason's Tract on the ministerial character, to enter into a full discussion of the correctness of the excellent Author's ideas and views on points of doctrine, occasionally introduced in it: Yet a hint or two may be permitted on such points. The passages concerning the aid of the spirit in prayer, to which he refers, will on examination be found to refer to the age of miraculous and extraordinary communications; when the state of the infant christian church, formed of illiterate members, just brought over from the superstitions of Judaism, or the corruptions of idolatry, and not yet furnished with written records and principles of christianity, being mere novices in the knowledge of it, rendered them incapable without extraordinary illumination and aid, of drawing up prayers and of composing psalms and hymns for public worship. The New Testament, and the heavenly doctrine it contains, furnishes materials for devotion to later ages: and in the exercises of our rational powers and pious dispositions, we may,

giving us a greater abstraction from the world, and a greater elevation of heart, and calling into lively exercise the graces before mentioned.——— This spiritual prayer may be entirely mental, without the use of words; and it is this spirituality which gives to our prayers all their effect and power; and without it no prayer, though ever so properly composed or decently delivered, will be acceptable to God, or available to ourselves: which therefore we should frequently and earnestly ask at the throne of divine grace.——But it is the other kind of prayer, which I am at present more particularly to consider, viz.

2. The gift of prayer; or an ability to perform this duty extempore, in a decent and devout manner, publicly. To this purpose three things are required. (1.) An enlargement of mind. (2.) A regulation or arrangement of our thoughts. (3.) A freedom of expression, or ready utterance. These will take in the matter, method, and manner of prayer.

(1.) An

may, with hope and joy rely on the "God of wisdom, the author of every good and perfect gift, with whom is the preparation of the heart of man," for all necessary concurrence with our native powers and holy desires, by the operations of his energy, which guides, directs, and animates all things. See Benson, on Jude, v. 20, and Essay annexed to 2. Timothy, part ii. ch. ii. T.

(1.) An enlargement of mind; which takes in the matter of prayer. Whatever we want, or desire, or know we ought to desire, should be the subject-matter of our prayers. In order to an enlargement of mind in prayer, and a suitable supply of matter.

We must (1.) be well acquainted with the state of our souls; and attend to our spiritual wants and weaknesses. The christian's own heart is his best prayer-book. The more we converse with that, the better shall we converse with God.—— It may not be amiss to commit to writing those defects and blemishes, we chiefly observe in our characters, the mercies we have received (especially any particular mercies we have received by prayer) either deliverance from evil, direction in difficulties, or the accomplishment of a desired end: each of which will be a proper subject either of petition, confession or thanksgiving. (2.) When you address yourself to the sacred work, see that the mind be free, composed and serious. Its conceptions and apprehensions will then be more ready, and proper thoughts will more freely occur. (3.) Possess your mind with an awful reverence of the Divine Majesty, whom you address as the heart-searching God. (4.) Let your expression be very deliberate and solemn, that the mind may have time not only to conceive, but to regulate

late and contemplate its conceptions. (5.) Daily study the word of God, with this view in particular, that you may be the better supplied with materials for devotion, (6.) Endeavour after a comprehensive view of things. Let the mind take a wide scope; and let it freely run on those subjects that most affect it. (7.) Let practical divinity, and a right disposition of heart towards God, be your principal care and study. (8.) Take some time to premeditate and recollect the chief topics of prayer, and commit some few well-chosen expressions and sentences to memory. (Lastly.) Let the subject you have preached upon, (and especially those you have found your mind most warmly affected with, and some of the most striking sentiments and expressions in them,) be wrought into the composition of your future prayers, ranged under their proper heads. This in time will greatly enrich your magazine of materials for prayer; and lead you to proper thoughts and words on the most important occasions.

(2.) We should not only aim at a comprehension, but observe a method in prayer: The usual method is (1.) Invocation. Wherein we are to make a solemn mention of some of the divine attributes. Nor should this be always confined to the beginning of prayer. It may very properly be repeated by way of preface to some of the principal

cipal petitions we put up to God; which when pronounced with seriousness and reverence will have a good effect to awaken the devotion of the heart: But always remember to invoke the Almighty under those attributes and perfections which are most suitable to the blessings you ask of him: e. g. When we pray for an accession of divine knowledge and wisdom, the address may be in this form. "O thou father and fountain of light, in whom there is no darkness at all, who givest to man the wisdom he asketh of thee, we beseech thee to disperse the darkness of our minds, shine into our hearts, and liberally bestow upon us that wisdom which thou knowest we want." (2.) Confession of sin. The transition to this part of prayer will be natural and easy, by taking particular notice of those moral perfections of the divine nature, in which we ourselves are most defective: e. g. The righteousness and holiness of God, as thus. "O holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, wherewith shall we thine unholy creatures presume to appear before thee, or lift up our eyes or thoughts to heaven, which our iniquities have reached before them!"——In public prayer, let these confessions be general. In private, particular, as your own consciousness of guilt may suggest. (3.) Petition. The connexion

here may be properly made by the mention of the divine mercies, or the remembrance of Christ's mediatorship, and the promise of grace and pardon to penitent sinners: And most properly begins with petition for pardon; then, for a more perfect renovation; after which proceed to beg for other spiritual blessings; as more light and knowledge, more love to God, more faith and hope, more strength against temptation and sin, more purity and heavenly-mindedness, more indifference to the world, &c. Then proceed to temporal blessings. (4.) Particular intercessions. These it will be best to pre-compose; and commit to memory the expressions and phrases that are most proper to be used on particular occasions. But let the phrase and subject be often varied, that it may not appear to be a form. And in all our prayers, upon any particular or special occasions, there is great need of much premeditation. (Lastly.) Thanksgiving. The subject of these are either general or particular; and as various as our mercies.

This part of prayer may perhaps come in more properly after invocation; and the transition from thence to confession, may be made by the mention of our unworthiness of the divine blessings.

Besides this general method, it would be proper to preserve in your mind a particular method of the several blessings you are to pray for, the sins you

you confess, and the mercies you commemorate. Let these be laid up in the mind, in order to be produced in their proper places. But do not tie yourself down to the invariable use of any method, whether general or particular; for a too close application of the mind to the method or expression of prayer, is apt to obstruct the devout employment of the heart. Besides, this will make the prayer appear too formal, artificial and studied, and bring a drowsiness upon the minds of those whose devotion you are called to excite and lead; who are never more pleased and edified in this part of worship, than when they observe us to be affected with our own prayers. A heart inspired with warm devotion will not be confined to exact method. And a lively start of thought, and a strong, surprising sentiment, uttered out of its due place, will strike the minds of our fellow worshippers so strongly, that they will not attend to the want of method, or if they do, will readily excuse it. Enlarge mostly on that part of prayer with which you find your own mind most affected; and let not any occasional deviations from your purposed method interrupt the fervent workings of your spirit. It is good however to be master of a regular system of materials, and of pertinent expressions under each head, which may serve instead of a form (but still to be uttered in the most solemn and reverend manner) when the powers of the mind happen to be heavy

heavy and unactive, or oppressed by the presence of others at a time we are called to the performance of this duty.

(3.) Next to the matter and method, we should have a regard to the manner of prayer. This respects (1.) the gesture of the body; which should be always decent, grave and humble, and expressive of the reverence of the heart: as folding the hands, or putting the open palms together, sometimes erect, sometimes declining with the body; sometimes lifted up with the eyes, according as the pious or humble motions of the heart direct. Let the eyes be mostly closed; or if open, steadily fixed: for nothing is more indecent than for the eyes to wander in the performance of this duty. (2.) The pronunciation. Let this be slow, solemn, grave, distinct and serious.——Let not your words flow faster than your thoughts; that the latter may have time to be maturely conceived and well expressed; by which means, one thought will more naturally rise out of another, and be in readiness to be produced whilst the other is uttering. And when the conceptions are thus before hand with the expressions, the mind will be free, composed and serious; and have time to feel the weight of its own thoughts; which will be a great help to the true spirit of prayer. "Due and proper pauses and stops will give the hearer time to conceive and reflect on what you speak, and more heartily

heartily to join with you; as well as give you leave to breathe, and make the work more easy and pleasant to yourself. Besides, when persons run on heedless with an incessant flow of words, being carried as it were in a violent stream, without rests or pauses, they are in danger of uttering things rashly before God; giving no time at all to their own meditation; but indulging their tongue to run sometimes too fast for their own thoughts, as well as for the affections of such as are present with them. All this arises from the hurry of the tongue into the middle of a sentence, before the mind has conceived the full and complete sense of it *."

Avoid the extremes of a too low and muttering voice, which some use, and a clamorous, strong, noisy tone, which others affect; as if they expected to be heard for their loud speaking; or as if the devotion of the heart consisted in a strength of lungs. This is improperly called *powerful* praying, and will be very disgustful to many.——(3.) The expression. Here let the following rules be observed.

(1.) Let your language be plain, but proper. Avoid all low, vulgar and obsolete phrases, but affect not an elegant or rhetorical style; much less an obscure and mystical one; for how can the

* Watts's Guide to Prayer, p. 93.

mind

mind feel the weight of that sentiment it does not understand *?

(2.) Scriptural expressions, if happily chosen, are very ornamental in prayer.—"It would be of excellent use to improve us in the gift of prayer, if in our daily reading of the word of God, we did observe what expressions were suited to the several parts of this duty; adoration, confession, petition, or thanksgiving; and let them be wrought into our addresses to God that day †."—And to be furnished with a *copia* of scriptural expressions to be used in prayer, read Henry's Method of Prayer, Bishop Wilkins's discourse on the Gift of Prayer; or Closet devotions.

But here let the two following cautions be observed.

1. Let not your prayer be all in scripture words. Some conceive a prayer of nothing but texts of scripture tacked together; which prevents the mind from taking a proper scope, and leaves no room for the invention, or the utterance of pious thoughts.

2. Avoid the dark, mystical expressions of scripture; which you have reason to believe the greatest part of your hearers do not comprehend the sense of.——"If we indulge the use of such

* See Wilkins on Prayer, p. 48.

† Watts's Guide to Prayer, p. 75.

dark

dark sentences in our speaking to God, we might as well pray in an unknown tongue, which was so much disapproved of by the apostle, 1 Cor xiv. 9. Let not the pomp and sound of any hard Hebrew names, or obscure phrase in scripture, allure us to be fond of them in social prayer, even though we ourselves should know the meaning of them, lest we confound the thoughts of our fellow-worshippers *."

(3.) If you have not the faculty of clothing your own ideas in proper and pertinent words, borrow the phrases and expressions of others upon the same subject. Make a collection of them from the best authors, but remember to pick out those which come nearest to your own phraseology, or such as you best approve, and would wish to have in readiness when you are speaking on that particular subject. And when you are furnished with a store of such well chosen expressions, turn them into the form of a prayer, and commit them to memory; which expedient will not only facilitate your expression, but give room for farther invention.—— "It is usual for young students to be very careful in gathering common place books: it would be a much greater advantage, if they were as diligent to collect, under proper references, any such particular matter, or expressions in prayer, wherewith

* Watts's Guide to Prayer, p. 76.

at

at any time they find themselves to be more especially affected *."

(4.) It is very proper and requisite that your prayer, after sermon, be formed on the subject you have been treating of; wherein you may go over all the heads of your discourse, and touch upon the most important sentiments, and repeat the most striking expressions in it. But as the mind will be then sometimes fatigued, and the powers exhausted and unfit to be put on the new labour of invention, it may not be amiss to pen down the short concluding prayer *verbatim*, to be repeated *memoriter*; but without confining yourself either to the precise expressions, or method you had before conceived, if the mind be able or disposed to enlarge.

(5.) Avoid those phrases and modes of expression which you know to be disagreeable or disgustful to your hearers; and prefer those that will give the least offence to any party or denomination of Christians.

(6.) Throw your prayer out of a form as much as you can, by varying both method and phrase, and by a fresh supply of sentiments and expressions; which will be a great help both to your own devotion, and theirs who join with you in this part of worship.

(7.) Let your prayers, as well as your sermons, be rather too short than too long.

* Wilkins on Prayer, p. 39.

(8.) Avoid

(8.) Avoid preaching prayers. "Some persons, who affect long prayers, are greatly faulty in this respect; they are speaking to the people and teaching them the doctrines of religion, and the mind and will of God, rather than speaking to God the desires of their own mind. They wander away from God to speak to men. But this is quite contrary to the nature of prayer *."

(Lastly.) Be not too fond of a nice uniformity of words, nor of perpetual diversity of expression in prayer. "We should seek indeed to be furnished with a rich variety of holy language, that our prayers may always have something new and something entertaining in them; and not tie ourselves to express one thing always in one set of words, lest this make us grow formal and dull, and indifferent in those petitions. But on the other hand,

* Watts's Guide to prayer, p. 86.

Another error, in this part of our public services to be carefully avoided is that of introducing oratory into our devotions. "There is scarcely any thing that can be more contrary to the nature of prayer, which is an humble, serious, solemn address to the greatest and best of Beings, and which ought to be couched in a fervent simplicity of language; and yet I have heard it carried on as if it were thought that God could be pleased and moved with pompous expressions. I have, with indignation and grief, heard it carried on in such a manner as even to destroy the very character of prayer, and to reduce it to a piece of empty declamation." Dr. Kippis's Charge at Bridport, p. 13, 14. T.

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if we are guilty of a perpetual affectation of new words, which we never before used, we shall sometimes miss our own best and most spiritual meaning, and many times be driven to great impropriety of speech; and at best, our prayers by this means will look like the fruit of our fancy, and invention, and the labour of the head, more than the breathings of the heart *."

I shall conclude this chapter with a few general directions how to attain and improve this useful gift.

(1.) Accustom yourself to a serious, devout and decent discharge of this duty every day in private; whereby a readiness of conception and expression will be sooner acquired †.

(2.) Spare no pains to gain so excellent a talent; for it is not to be had (especially by some) without much application: but it is worth it all: and there are few things on which the labour of one who is a student for the sacred ministry can be more usefully employed.

(3.) Often pray for this gift of prayer.

(4.) Endeavour to get your spirit deeply impressed with the great things of religion: and let those

* Watt's Guide to Prayer, p. 89.

† See here Dr. Doddridge's admirable Charge to Mr. JOHN JENNINGS, Aug. 12, 1742. Sermons and Tracts, vol. iii. p. 6, 7, 8. 12mo. T.

sentiments

sentiments which most affected you in your most serious frames, be wrought into your prayers *.

(5.) Maintain a manly presence of mind, and use all proper means to conquer that bashfulness and timidity of spirit which young persons are subject to, and is a great hinderance to a decent discharge of this duty †.

(6.) Take every opportunity you can to hear others pray; and imitate them in every thing you observe to be decent, graceful and excellent ‡.

(Lastly.)

* "Let your public prayers emit a divine flame, kindled by your secret transactions with God; that your adorations, petitions, confessions, and thanksgivings, may appear to be the spontaneous efflux of your own hearts, rather than the operose productions of your understandings. Let me not be mistaken; the judgment should always lead, the affections follow."

Dr. Furneaux's Charge at Bridport, 1769, p. 59. T.

† See Dr. Watts's Guide to Prayer, p. 110, 112.

‡ "We cannot think too much of the importance of performing this duty, to general acceptance, and to the honour of religion, in order to affect and elevate men's hearts with our adorations and thanksgivings, melt them with our confessions, and engage their most devout and ardent desires after the blessings for which we pray; I say we cannot think too much of the importance of pleasing and edifying our fellow worshippers *before-hand*, in order to acquire in general a good habit of prayer, or fit us for engaging in the exercise of it; and we cannot think too little of men, and too much of God, when we are *actually* employed in the service." Id. p. 60, 61.

N. B.

(Lastly.) Vary your concluding doxologies. And that you may herein give no offence to any, it may be proper to confine yourself to those of scripture, which are very various, and such as follow.

Heb. xiii. 21. Through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Rom. xvi. 25. 27. Now to him that is of power to establish you according to the gospel of Jesus Christ. To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Rom. ix. 5. Through Jesus Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

Gal. i. 4, 5. Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Ephes. iii. 20, 21. Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

1 Tim. i. 17. Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

N. B. To the books recommended by our author, to supply thoughts and expressions for Prayer, may be added "An Essay on Prayer, in two parts; with a variety of specimens of Prayer." 1760. T.

1 Pet. iv. 11. Through Jesus Christ to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

2. Pet. iii. 18. Through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Jude ver. 24, 25. Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Rev. i. 5, 6. Unto him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests to God even his Father: to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Rev. v. 13. Blessing and honour, and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

CHAP. VI.

CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

1. Of baptism.

"A minister ought to instruct his people frequently in the nature of baptism, that they may not go about it merely as a ceremony, as it is too visible the greater part do, but that they may consider it as the dedicating their children to God, the offering them to Christ, and the holding them thereafter as his; directing their chief care about them to the breeding them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord *." In the administration of this ordinance it is best to keep to the original institution as your rule and guide. The most natural method to be used in the celebration of it, seems to be this:

(1.) Recite the express words of the institution. Matt. xviii. 28. Then,

(2.) It would not be amiss to say something in vindication of those two positive institutions of

* Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 185.

christianity,

christianity, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and to shew the excellency of the christian dispensation from its simplicity, and that it is not incumbered with those numerous external ceremonies, which the Jewish dispensation was.

(3.) Make a short discourse on the ordinance as a sacrament of the christian church; wherein you may offer some useful remarks on the practice of infant baptism; then add some proper observations relating to the mode and manner in which the ordinance is to be celebrated; laying this down as an undisputed principle, that in the manner of performing divine worship, it is always best and safest to keep close to the divine rule *; so as neither to go beyond, nor fall short of it: for in the former

* The author expresseth himself probably from candour and tenderness to the mistakes of Christians, too feebly here. It is not only *always best* and *safest*, but a *duty* to keep close to the divine rule. Deviations from the directions of the lawgiver, in matters of *instituted duty* are acts of disobedience, highly culpable and as they open the door to human invention, to evil-worships and superstition, are of very dangerous tendency. When the barrier of the divine rule is once broken, who hath authority to erect a new one? It is a matter of much consequence to impress this upon the minds of Christians, because it is the only thing that can either prevent or reform the corruptions of revealed religion. "In the observance of an *express* and *positive* law, it is TREASON, it is REBELLION, to disregard or alter the injunctions of the LEGISLATOR," Wakefield's "Plain and Short Account of Baptism," p. 10. T.

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case, we know not whether human and arbitrary additions will be approved of God; but this we are sure of, he will never condemn us for not doing what he never commanded; and therefore the sign of the cross may be safely omitted, as no where enjoined by God himself: and as to the latter case, (*i. e.* neglecting any part of our rule, or those instructions he hath given us for the directory of our worship) this must certainly be criminal, and derogatory to the honour of the divine institutor. But where the circumstance or mode of any religious action is left undetermined in the form and words of the institution, that which is most decent and convenient is to be preferred. Hence sprinkling or washing the face of the baptized person gently with the hand, is to be preferred to plunging the body all over in water; because the former is more safe and decent, and the latter no where commanded as the standing universal mode of baptizing *.

4. Be

* It escaped, it should seem, our author's attention, that in all positive duties or duties made such by *institution*, the mode, or manner, which is the rite itself, as well as the design, is an essential part of the religious act. It is a solecism, to suppose, that a lawgiver should express himself in ambiguous terms; in terms that have no explicit and precise meaning, when he enjoins a service, the nature and performance of which depend solely on his will and declarations. A modern writer, the present Bishop of Lincoln, has expressed himself, however, in the same loose way. "No

(4.) Be more particular in explaining the nature, end, and design of this ordinance, and in opening the typical part of it. Here you may bring in the doctrine of sanctification, and the purifying influences of the holy spirit figured by the water in baptism, and the relation this christian institution has to the baptizing of proselytes, and to the Jewish ordinance of circumcision.

(5.) You

"No particular direction being given in scripture" he asserts, "concerning the manner in which water is to be applied in baptism, we may allow immersion, affusion or aspersion, and whether it be performed three times or once, to be equally valid," Elements of Christian Theology, v. ii.p. 457. Before the position of these respectable writers be admitted, it should be proved, according to the observation of an acute and judicious animadverter on the latter, that the word to *baptize*, was used in scripture in these different senses, that it meant at one time to immerse, at another time to affuse, at another time to sprinkle On the contrary, if the word to *baptize* meant only to dip; if it had been always understood in this sense, if dipping had been the constant practice, then our Saviour's words are as explicit as possible, and a particular direction is given for the use of water. Frend's Letters to Dr. Prettyman, p. 11.——Immersion, affusion and sprinkling are distinct applications of water, expressed by different and appropriate terms: and there is not, I believe, any instance to be produced from any language of a word that, indiscriminately, signifies all those acts. A laundress of the lowest rank,

(5.) You may then briefly open the nature of the present duty of the parents; in giving up their child to God, and what is implied therein, viz. their desire that it should be received into the church of Christ, and brought up in the christian faith. And be very particular in your address to the parents of the infant which is to be baptized: pressing upon them the importance of their charge, and the care they are to take in the education of their child; especially in reference to its spiritual and eternal concerns. But this may be either before, or after the ceremonial part of the ordinance is performed.

(6.) Proceed then to ask a blessing upon the ordinance; and pray for the infant in particular.

(7.) Then take the infant, and washing it gently with water, baptize it in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

knows how to use these words in English, with distinctive propriety. The late learned Mr. Wakefield observes, that the greek word Βαπτιζω, *baptize*, universally, as often as it occurs in classic authors, signifies to "*dip entirely under water*;" and he adds, "Nor do I know, that any man has ever pretended to affix a different meaning to the word itself or to its derivatives." Mr. Wakefield's "Plain and Short Account", &c. p. 10. If the remarks of these learned writers be correct, the religious rite to which Mr. Mason refers, is described with all the exactness and precision, that language admits. T.

Then,

Then, lastly, (if the exhortation to the parents do not come in here, but was addressed to them before) conclude with the thanksgiving prayer and the benediction *.

II. Of

*There is a case under this chapter, for which our author has given no directions: which sometimes occurs among the denomination of Christians, who practise the rite called infant-baptism; and which naturally, often calls for the service of ministers among Christians who discard that rite: I mean the administration of baptism, to those of riper years, who make by it a personal profession of faith and repentance. The young minister may wish for some advices on this subject to supply Mr. Mason's omission. He might be referred to Dr. Priestley's "Forms of Prayer for Unitarian Congregations"; or to the "Reformed Liturgy" used at the Chapel in Essex-street, as proper models, and well adapted to suggest hints, for the service. But it may be more suitable to the nature of this work to offer some particular directions.

1. He will converse with seriousness, but with candor and affability, without any affectation of priestly claims, without any symptom of the prying curiosity of an inquisitor or confessor, with the person who requests this administration of baptism. He will inquire into the views which the candidate for baptism has of the ordinance and into the grounds, on which he makes his request. In this conversation there will be an opportunity to state, plainly and briefly, the evidences of the truth of the Gospel,—the nature of christianity, and the excellence and importance of the benefit it offers to the reception of mankind. This is an opportunity to converse on the reasonableness and advan-

II. Of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

1. Of the method of performing it.

2. Of taking in communicants.

1. Of the method of performing it. The most regular method seems to be this. (1.) Make a short preparatory discourse, tending to open the nature and design of this sacrament, and the necessity and importance of its intention; or to excite

tages of a life directed by the precepts and principles of the Gospel—on the design and obligations of the profession of religion, made by baptism;—on the dispositions of sincerity, humility and divine dependence that should accompany it, the temptations to which pious virtue is exposed, the promises which animate and the aids which strengthen the mind in the christian course, and on the great and glorious reward of perseverance and fidelity in it. The foundation of ritual duties, as resting solely on the authority and command of God—their utility as memorials of past events, expressions of the sentiments and frame of the mind and means of striking the senses—the simplicity and significance of the christian institutions of baptism and the Lord's supper, the obligations we are under to observe them, if we would fulfil all righteousness and walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless—and the influence of the observance, on the cause of religion are also at such a time, useful topics of discourse. The design of baptism, as a profession of our believing the truth and receiving the precepts of the gospel,—its significance as a memorial of the burial and resurrection of Christ, and

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excite some devout affections in the minds of the communicants, especially relating to the love of Christ, the design of his death and sufferings, and the necessity of a frequent commemoration thereof in this sacred institution. But let the address be very serious, and very solemn. Then (2.) read distinctly the words of the institution. Then

an emblem of moral purity, of dying unto sin and "walking in newness of life",—the practical uses of it, as a stipulation to take Christ alone for our master in religious matters, as an engagement to walk worthy of the christian name and profession, and as a bond of love among Christians; are points, that more particularly offer to be enlarged upon in such a conversation. Baptism, it should be insisted on, is a sign of admission into the christian church, not of any particular party or division of christians: it is the institution of Jesus, not the badge of any leader of a sect. It is a matter of importance also to observe, that the rule of a Christian's life, is not to be derived from the manners of professing Christians, but from the precepts of Christ: that not *their* example, but *his* is our true model. On no occasion can men be urged, with more propriety, not to substitute profession for practice; not to rest in the ceremony; reminding them, seriously and earnestly, "that baptism now saveth us, not the washing away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God."

If prayer suitable to such a conversation close it, there will be a pertinence and force in an act of devotion presented in such a connection; and serious impressions will be strengthened.

2. The

Then (3.) solemnly pray for the divine blessing and presence; give thanks to God for the institution of the visible symbols to affect your mind, and assist your faith; and earnestly pray that the great end of this sacred solemnity may be visibly answered in every one of the communicants, and be manifested in their growing love to the Redeemer, and more steady attachment to his gospel, as their only rule of faith and life. Then (4.) break the

2. The administration of the ordinance, properly follows, when the minister is satisfied concerning the candidate's understanding and belief of the christian religion, and serious purposes of holy obedience.

There are sentences and portions of scripture, with which the service may be introduced; or which may be read, as lessons; or adopted under the form of exhortation or exposition, as the basis of suitable observations and persuasions. Such as Psalms, xxv. 8, 9.—cxix. 1, 6. Luke, ix. 26. Deut. v. Proverbs, iii. Matthew, iii. 13, &c. ch. xxviii. 16, to the end. Mark, xvi. 14, to the end. Luke, iii. 21—24. Acts, ii. 37—43. Acts, viii. 26, to the end. Acts, ix. 1—22. Acts, x. 44, to the end. Acts, xvi. 14, 15. Acts, xviii. 8—12. Acts, xix. 1—8. Rom. vi. 1—7. Gal. iii. 26 Col. ii. 6—13.

To the reading of these portions of scripture, and to the practical remarks formed on them, or to a short discourse on the nature and design of baptism, let there follow a prayer, acknowledging the divine goodness in the gospel, and imploring his gracious acceptance of the profession of faith

the sacramental bread, and distribute it either personally, or by the hands of the deacons. To assist the devotion of the communicants, 'tis the custom of some ministers to pronounce now and then some serious and weighty sentences relative to the love

faith in it about to be made. The mercy of God to a sinful world through Jesus Christ, his divine mission, the blessings of which he is the minister, the power and grace with which his kingdom was set up in the world, the preservation of it through all generations and amidst every opposition and danger, the light, blessings and hopes which it has perpetuated, the converts that have been made to it, the pious dispositions of the person who is ready to profess faith in the gospel, the prospect of the continuance of it to all ages, diffusing knowledge, truth, divine mercy and heavenly hope, and making converts to its power, are all subjects of devout joy, adoration and praise on such an occasion: and furnish materials for lively and fervent thanksgivings.

The profession of faith made at baptism, ought to be confined to the fundamental article, which discriminates a Christian from a Jew, or a Mahometan, or any other religious profession; that is, an acknowledgment of the divine mission of Jesus, of Nazareth. Such a verbal profession of faith, properly accompanies the administration of this rite, both to shew its design and to express the sentiments and intentions of the baptized. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

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love and sufferings of Christ, or the benefits of his death. But this is disused by others under an apprehension that instead of quickening the devotion of our fellow-worshippers, it may interrupt it, by diverting the course of their own meditations. (5.) After the distribution of the bread, make a short prayer to beg the continuance of the divine presence and blessing, and that God would graciously forgive the infirmities of our worship; and give thanks for the element you are about to partake of, and pray that it may answer the design intended by it; which is all that protestants mean by the consecration of the elements. But it is the custom with some to pray for a blessing on both the elements, in one single prayer. (6.) Then

The words of the institution in Matthew, afford a pattern, and direction for the minister in the act of baptism.

It will impress and edify the spectators or persons present, if he utter with solemnity previously to going down into the water, or when in it, or on coming out of it, or in each situation, some pertinent text of scripture; as Psalm, cxix. 1, 2, 3, 33, 57. Matthew, iii. 15. Matthew, x. 32, 33, Rom. x. 9, 10. Gal. iii. 27. Rev. ii. 10. Rev. xxii. 14.

It is customary with some ministers to conclude here, with a benediction: others, after the baptism sing a hymn, address the baptized in an exhortation to a conduct becoming the gospel, and to perseverance in the christian course; and close with prayer, for the divine acceptance and blessing. T.

follows

follows the distribution of the cup in the manner before mentioned. In some churches it is the custom for the minister to partake of the elements last: And in others first; pronouncing with an audible voice these, or some such words, "In obedience to Christ's command, and in remembrance of him, I take and eat this bread, as the memorial of his body which was broken for sin." And so in partaking of the cup, "I take and drink this cup, &c." After the distribution of the elements, the minister sometimes makes a short exhortation to the people, relating to the nature of their sacramental obligations, and exhorting them to be faithful thereunto. After which a collection is made for the poor by the deacon from pew to pew, or at the door when the congregation breaks up. (7.) Then follows a suitable hymn or psalm. Lastly. Conclude with a short thanksgiving prayer. In order to furnish your mind with suitable matter for your sacramental exhortations and prayers, it is requisite to read some proper devotional treatise on this ordinance, before you enter on the celebration of it *.

2. The

* To Mr. Mason's directions on the administration of the sacraments, I am inclined to subjoin Mr. Orton's reflections on this subject, in a letter to a friend; "I cannot agree with you, that administering the sacraments, is the easiest

2. The method of admitting communicants to the Lord's table. This is different in different churches. For direction in this affair these general rules may be of service.

(1.) As every particular church is a select religious society, every member of it has a right to be satisfied of the character and qualification of every new member that is admitted into it. This is plain from the very nature and design of such a society, and necessary to preserve the purity and discipline of the church.

(2.) That the qualifications required in the candidates, should be no other than what we have plain warrant from scripture to demand, and such

and least important part of our office. I always considered them as most important, and found it more difficult to administer them, as they should be, than to preach. If any parts of our work be more difficult than the rest, it must be these; because they comprehend every other. At least, of this I am thoroughly persuaded, that it requires a great deal of pains with a minister's own heart, to get into such a frame for the administration of them (especially the Lord's supper,) as is necessary or desirable, if he would, spread a flame of gratitude and devotion through the hearts of those who join with him. The superficial and trifling manner in which many prepare for these ordinances (if it may be called preparation) and in which they are administered, has been greatly prejudicial to the interest of religion." Leters to Dissenting Ministers and Students. vol. i. p. 13. T.

as

as are necessary to preserve purity and discipline: For herein (as well as in other parts of Christian discipline and church-government) we are strictly to adhere to scripture as our rule, so far as it affords us any direction in this matter. And therefore to require that the spiritual experiences of the candidate be publicly declared by himself, or read by another, in the presence of the church, before he is suffered to communicate with them, (which is the practice in some protestant-dissenting congregations) is not only unnecessary, but unwarrantable, and often attended with very bad effects; it is unnecessary, because it is found not to answer the end principally designed, the greater purity of the church; it is unwarrantable, because we have no shadow of a precept or precedent for it in scripture, or primitive antiquity; and the bad consequences of it, are (1.) It bars the way to this ordinance, discourages meek, humble and modest persons from proposing themselves to the communion, whilst it is easily accessible to men of bold, forward and confident tempers. (2.) It is a temptation to the candidates to declare more than they have really experienced, lest the church should reject them; or to describe the animal passions as divine influences, and the workings of the imagination as the operations of the Spirit, which young and unexperienced Christians are too apt to do.

do. (3.) It supposes and countenances some very mistaken principles, viz. that none have a right to this ordinance but those whose hearts are really converted; nor even they, until they are sensible of this, and are able to make others sensible of it, by describing the time, means, manner an effects of that conversion. (4.) It attributes a power to the church which they have no right to, viz. of judging the hearts of others; and that by a very precarious rule, viz. from what they say of themselves. For if they judge by the general character, life and conversation of the candidate (which is a much better rule) there is no necessity for a public declaration of his experience. It likewise implies a power in the church of excluding from this ordinance all that cannot produce such evidence of their real conversion, as will satisfy every member of the church. Upon what foundation so extraordinary a claim is built it is hard to say. (Lastly.) This practice tends to make the members thus admitted, too careless and confident after their admission; for when they have the testimony of the whole church concurring with their own strong imagination that they are true converted Christians, and look upon the sins they commit after this only as the weaknesses of God's children, they are in great danger of being betrayed into a false and fatal peace. Therefore,

(3.) A

(3.) A creditable profession, and unblemished character and conversation may be deemed as a necessary and sufficient qualification for the holy communion. This is necessary, in order to keep up the discipline, and preserve the purity of the church; and it is sufficient, because we do not find that our sacred rule requires any thing farther. And

(4.) As soon as the members of the church are satisfied of this general qualification of the candidate, they have no right to refuse their assent to his admission.

(5.) Provided they have this satisfaction, it is not material by what means they receive it. Sometimes the elders of the church are deputed to confer privately with the candidate, and enquire into his knowledge of the design and nature of this ordinance; and whether his views and ends in desiring to join in it be sincere and right. Sometimes this is left entirely to the minister, whose business it more properly is; who, if he be satisfied in those points, acquaints the church of it at the next ensuing sacrament: and thereupon declares, that if any of the members present do not signify to him (before the next sacrament) any objections against the candidate's admission, he will then (by their consent) be admitted to the ordinance, as a member of that church. In other churches,

churches, members are admitted by the minister only, without any notice given to the church until the very time of their admission; nor even then are they apprized of it any other way, than by a few petitions in the minister's prayer particularly in behalf of the new-admitted member.

(Lastly.) The church has an undoubted right to expel irregular and unworthy members: This is generally done at first by suspension; when the minister intimates his desire, and that of the church, to the delinquent member, that he would refrain from coming to the sacrament till he hears farther from him; which is generally sufficient, without the solemnity of a formal and public expulsion.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

OF VISITING THE SICK*.

THIS is a very arduous and delicate office, and especially in some circumstances; and a different method of address and conduct is requisite according to the different characters of the persons you visit.

It

* "Not only sickness, but every kind of affliction, temporal losses or the death of relations, is an occasion which merits the presence and assistance of a minister. Adversity of every kind demands both sympathy and consolation; and to 'weep with those who weep,' and to comfort them if possible is a noble employment."

Gerrard's Pastoral Care, p. 164.

"These are some of the *mollia tempora fandi*, seasons, when the mind is awake, attentive, tender and easily impressed; and good advice and pious reflections are suggested with great advantage, and ordinarily with good effect."

Furneaux's Charge, p. 63.

"Besides

It will therefore be proper,

I. To lay down some general rules to be observed, in order to a right execution of this part of your duty.

II. To specify some particular cases.

I. To lay down some general rules to be observed, in order to a right execution of this part of your duty *.

" Besides visiting the sick, another natural introduction to clergymen, intent on conveying private instruction, is any great calamity; and especially the decease of relations and friends. The voluntary act of humane attendance on survivors, in families where a disease has proved fatal, should always be added to that performance of duty which the rules of our church exact. Such events soften the mind; and dispose it to serious discourse, and to acts of devotion. Readily embracing these opportunities, the good minister of Christ, will prepare himself to heal the wounds of grief by the best topics of christian consolation, he will also select or write prayers adapted to ordinary occurrences of this nature: that when a fit season presents itself, he may lead the devotions of a distressed individual or family; reminding such of St. James' precept, 'Is any among you afflicted, let him pray.'" Dr. Newcome's Primary Charge, as Archbishop of Armagh, p. 23, 24. T.

* " In every thing that a minister says to a sick person, he ought to keep three things steadily in view; the influence which it may have on the person, if dying; the influence which it may have on him, if he recover; and the influence it may have on persons in health, who are about him."

Gerrard's Pastoral Care, p. 168. T.

(1.) A previous preparation for it is very proper; by considering what kind of address will be most necessary and suitable to the person you visit. It is something strange (as a late judicious divine well observes, that ministers who take so much pains to prepare for the work of the pulpit, should generally take so little, to prepare for this, which is one of the most difficult, and most important offices in the ministry *.

(2.) It would be adviseable to have in readiness a good store of scripture-expressions, adapted to the support and comfort of the afflicted; which may be easily collected from the common-place-book to the bible; and, out of these, chuse such as are most applicable to the case of your friend.

(3.) Adapt yourself to his taste and understanding, as well as to the circumstances of his case; by making such observations, and using such expressions as you know are most familiar and agreeable to him: But take care to explain the phrases you make use of, if you have reason to think he does not understand them.

* Cette fonction est aussi une de celles, dont on s'aquite le plus mal. La pluspart des ministres n'y aportent aucune préparation. Cependant, elle n'est pas moins difficile qu'importante. On se prépare pour les sermons, mais non pas pour voir les malades.

Ostervald du governement de l'Eglise, p. 307.

(4.) Let

(4.) Let your deportment and address be very free, friendly, close, tender and compassionate.

(5.) Place yourself in the condition of the person before you; and consider in what manner you would wish a minister or friend to behave to you in those circumstances.

(6.) Whilst you are tender, be sure to be faithful *; and have respect to the approbation of your conscience afterwards. Remember that you are a minister of the gospel, and must not sacrifice the cause of truth and godliness to a false shame or tenderness.

(Lastly.) Let your prayer for the sick person be short, but very serious and solemn, and adapted as much as may be to the state of his soul, and the danger of his disease. In all which offices there is great need of much piety, fidelity and wisdom †.

II. Let

* "Our chief danger in the present age, seems to be, in erring on the side of candour and complaisance, and not dealing with mankind with sufficient plainness and fidelity. Many of my people have died, with whom my conscience has afterwards accused me of not dealing so plainly as I should." Orton's Letters to dissenting Ministers, v. i. p. 59, 60.

"It requires our peculiar care, especially with respect to dying persons, that we do not go beyond the hopes and encouragements afforded by the doctrines and terms of the gospel." Kippis's Charge, p. 27. T.

† Pour montrer que la piété est necessaire, vous n'avez que remarquer, qu'on fait trois fonctions aupres de malades.

Il

II. Let us now consider how a minister ought to behave in his visitation of the sick, under some particular circumstances. And

1. If you have reason to believe that the afflicted person you visit is a real good Christian, your work will not be very difficult; it may be pleasant and useful; and you may possibly receive more advantage from him, than he does from you. For a Christian's graces are at such a time commonly most lively, and the tongue very faithful to the sentiments of the heart; so that you will presently see what it is that lies most upon his mind. And as your present business will be to administer *consolation* and solve his *doubts*,

Your topics of *consolation* may be taken (1.) From his past experience. Direct him to look back to the goodness of God to him, and the sensible experience he has had of the divine love and presence. Bid him think of what God has done for his soul, and thence draw David's conclusion, "Because the Lord has been my help, &c." (2.) Refer his thoughts to the paternal character. And bid him think of the compassions of a Father to a weak and helpless child. (3.) Open the inexhaustible stores of the divine mercy in the

Il faut sonder la conscience, leur donner les conseils, qui sont necessaires, et prier pour eux. Ostervald du gouvernement de l'Eglise, p. 290.

Gospel.

gospel. (4.) Insist on the mighty efficacy of the Redeemer's blood * (5.) The genuine marks of a true faith and sincere repentance. (Lastly.) Endeavour to affect his mind with a lively apprehension of the heavenly glory, to which he will very shortly be received.

And as to his *doubts*, tell him, (1.) That he is not a proper judge in his own case, under the present weakness of his powers; that the lowness of his animal spirits causes him to look too much upon the dark side, and to see every thing through a wrong medium; that he has no reason to suspect his case to be worse now than it was when he had better hopes concerning it. (2.) That the best of men have had their doubts; that if it be the sign of a weak faith, it is however the sign of

* It is to be wished, that the author had used language more plain and explicit. The phrase "The efficacy of the Redeemer's blood" may, and considering the ideas, generally entertained concerning the efficacy of the death of Christ, most probably will, be understood, as meaning either an equivalent for personal righteousness and a compensation for sin; or an influence on the divine mind, in making God propitious; notions, unfavourable to the cause of virtue, and conveying unsuitable and injurious thoughts of the God of love, and the Father of mercies. But if the phrase be explained as signifying the full confirmation, which the covenant of divine favour, or grace, received by the death of Christ, it is a sense at once just and scriptural, honourable to God and very consolatory to the sinner. T.

some

some true faith. (3.) That it is much safer to be doubtful than over-confident. (4.) That however variable be our frame, God's regards for his own children are unchangeable. (5.) Bid him examine his doubts to the bottom, and trace them up to the true source; and perhaps they may appear to arise from the agency of Satan, who delights to disturb the tranquillity of those he cannot destroy. (6.) Ask him, if he has any hopes? and whether he would part with the little hope he has, for the greatest treasures on earth? Bid him examine the foundation of those hopes, as well as that of his fears; for he can never judge aright until he look on both sides: And oftentimes a Christian's weak hope has a better foundation than his strongest fears. But,

2. Is the character of the sick person you visit doubtful? your business is more difficult, and your address must be more cautious.

If there be no apparent danger of death, (1.) Endeavour to give him just notions of a particular providence; that though men do not so often attend to it as they ought, yet most certain it is, both from scripture and reason, that whatever befals every individual man on earth is under the immediate direction of providence: And as to this affliction in particular, persuade him to regard and consider it as the hand of God. Then (2.)

discourse

discourse on the wisdom and goodness of God in sending these occasional rebukes of his providence; which, whatever we think, are sent for the best ends. Afflictions are the physic of the soul, designed to purify and purge it. (3.) Under this view of things press upon him the exercise of patience, submission and a total resignation to the divine will; and direct him to look upon the present dispensation (though grievous) as sent in mercy to him, and as what may hereafter produce the most excellent effects. (4.) Tell him, that in the best of men there are sins and follies sufficient to justify the severest dispensations of God's providence; that many good Christians have suffered worse; and what reason he has to be thankful that his case is not more calamitous. (5.) Remind him of the many mercies mixed with the present affliction. (6.) If it should please God to restore him, exhort him faithfully to concur with the design of this visitation, by his constant endeavour to amend what his conscience now smites him for.

But if there be apparent symptoms of approaching death, exhort him (1.) seriously to review his past life, to call to mind the most remarkable transgressions of it, for which he should now greatly humble his soul before God, and sincerely renew his repentance. And that his repentance may

may be sincere and unfeigned, (2.) Endeavour to make him sensible of the evil and guilt of sin, from its contrariety to the holy nature of God, and the inevitable ruin it exposes the soul unto. (3.) When he is thus humble and penitent, revive him with the consolations of the gospel; the amazing compassion and goodness of God to a world of sinners, in sending his son to redeem them by his death; and the merits of the Redeemer's sufferings, whose blood cleanses from all sin *. Then (4.) Open to him in a plain and easy manner the gospel-method of salvation by Jesus Christ, and the only terms of pardon there proposed, viz. Repentance, faith, and a holy life:

* The blood of the beasts slain in sacrifice, on the great day of atonement, which the high priest sprinkled before the ark of the covenant, assured the pardon of ceremonial guilt only: but the blood of Christ, which having shed to confirm the new covenant, he entered into heaven for us; assures the pardon of all sins, even of those from which men could not be justified by the law of Moses, See Benson, on 1 John, i. 7. The time of sickness is not a season for a minister to enter into a minute and critical discussion of the meaning of the language of scripture: it may be best therefore to wave the use of metaphorical and allusive phrases, and to confine himself to the plain and least figurative declarations of the divine mercy, with which the scriptures of the old and new Testament abound: these are not so liable to be misunderstood, and carry full consolation and divine authority with them. T.

And

And tell him particularly, that saving faith in Christ does not consist in a confident persuasion that he died for him in particular, but in the lively exercise of love to him, a desire to serve and please him, and an humble dependance on his merits for justification and pardon. (5.) In a deep self-abhorrence for his sins, and in such a lively faith in Christ, advise him to call upon the Father of mercies for pardon through Jesus Christ his Son. (6.) Remind him to settle his affairs in this World, as well as he can; and then think—no more of it for ever. And (Lastly.) Leave with him some suitable text of Scripture which you apprehend most applicable to the state of his soul. But,

3. If the sick man you visit has been notoriously wicked, and appears ignorant, insensible and hardened, your business then is the most difficult of all *.

To

* "It is difficult to know how to treat the ignorant and uninstructed, the hardened and insensible, and the alarmed and awakened sinner; so as to avoid on the one hand, encouraging presumption, and on the other, despair. I believe in general, from persons of such characters, in such seasons, not much is to be expected, and little can be done. The grand opportunity is over, and life mispent cannot be recalled:—A consideration, which should excite us all to leave nothing of consequence to our salvation, to the last fleeting

To make any right impression on such a one, you must (1.) Pray to God before-hand that you may be enabled to say something that is suitable to his case, which may be a means of awakening him to a proper sense of his danger—And then (2.) When you come into his room, appear deeply affected with his case. Let him see that you are more concerned for him, than he is for himself; that you are more sensible of his danger than he is of his own—Then (3.) In order to bring him to a proper sense of his state and danger, put some close questions to him relating to the holy and righteous nature of God; his infinite hatred of sin; the absolute impossibility of being happy hereafter but in his favour; the certainty of a future judgment, When God will render to every one according to his works, and the unspeakable importance of the soul's being safe for eternity. Then (4.) Beg of him not to deceive himself with vain hopes; but be willing to see the truth of his case, as it is represented to him in the unerring word of God, however dangerous or dreadful it may appear to him; for whilst he shuts

fleeting moment of life.—However I would not limit the divine mercy, let the scripture be your rule in what you suggest on these occasions." Furneaux's Charge, p. 63, 64. T.

his eyes against the danger, there is no possibility of escaping it*. (5.) If his distemper is like to be fatal, let him know it; and that all that can be done to escape everlasting misery, must immediately be done: that there is as yet some hope (though it be but small) that this possibly may be done; that on this moment depends his future condition for ever: And beg him not to lose this last and only cast he has for eternity. (6.) If his conscience by this means be awakened, and you observe some genuine relentings of heart, take that occasion to assist its workings, to enforce its reproofs and urge its conviction, until you see something like a true penitential remorse. Then (7.) Earnestly pray with him, and for him; that God would continue to give him a just sense of his sin and danger, and that his grace and spirit may carry on those convictions until they issue in a real change of heart. Then (8.) Take your leave of him in a tender and affectionate manner, not without giving him some hope that if the same sensible and penitent frame continue, there may be mercy in reserve for him: But beg of him whilst he has the use of his reason not to omit any opportunity of crying mightily to God for mercy through the

* See Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 195.

merits

merits of Jesus Christ his son. (9.) In your next visit (which should be soon after this) if you find him penitent, exhort him to glorify God by making an ample confession of his sins in private, with all their heinous aggravations, and not to be afraid to see the worst of himself; and if he has in any matter injured or defrauded others, you must insist upon it, as a mark of true repentance, that he immediately make restitution or satisfaction, if it be in his power. (Lastly.) If his penitential sorrow still continue, and you have reason to believe him sincere, you may begin to administer the consolations of the gospel, and address him as you have been directed in the case of the person before mentioned under the like circumstances *.

CHAP.

* See Spinks's Sick-man visited.

Ostervald de la Visite des Malades.

"But the attendance of a faithful pastor does not terminate with the disease. Those who recover from sickness should be exhorted to shew the warmest gratitude, in word and deed, to the Lord of life and death for protracting their time of probation; to recollect their vows made in sickness; to look back on that impartial estimate of human affairs which the fullest conviction then compelled them to form; to consider their sickness as a gracious admonition from above,

CHAP. VIII.

CONCERNING THE MINISTER'S CONDUCT TOWARDS HIS PEOPLE.

HERE it will be proper, 1. to lay down some general rules to be observed at all times. And, 2. some

that 'man cometh up, and is cut down, as a flower;' to reflect with what a detestation and abhorrence of their former sins they were then impressed, and in what magnitude and deformity they then appeared; to remember what consolation, hope and joy beamed on their mind, if a few good actions, however imperfect, presented themselves to their thoughts; to confirm their holy resolutions by the means which religion presents; and to suppose that our Lord addresses to every man in such circumstances, this affectionate admonition; 'Behold thou art restored; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." John, v. 14.

Bishop Stearne gives this excellent advice to parish ministers: "Not to leave the sick without obtaining permission from

2. some particular rules applicable to extraordinary occasions.

1. To lay down some general rules to be observed at all times.

Previously to these I would desire you to observe these two things: (1.) Arm yourself with resolution, and prepare to meet with difficulties and contempt. The nature of your office implies the first, and all the dignity of it will not secure you from the last. But if you behave prudently and faithfully in it, you will meet with contempt from none but those who deserve it, and whose esteem would be no honour. (2.) Study the true nature of christian humility: And let your mind be clothed with it as its greatest ornament. But distinguish

from them to recal their holy engagements to their memory, if ever they perceive them relapsing into those vices which they then determined to abandon. For," as he well observes, "when this permission is obtained, the clergy can use brotherly correction without offence, when it becomes necessary; and by a seasonable interposition of that kind, may reclaim a sinner from the error of his way; since there is no more forcible or acceptable admonition, than what is amicably introduced by the previous mention of a former permission." Dr. NEWCOME'S Primary Charge, p. 21, 22, 23. On the subject of this chapter, See GERRARD'S Pastoral Care, part ii. ch. i. sect. 5. T.

between

between that dastardly meanness and pusillanimity which makes you ashamed to look in the face, and speak in the presence of your superiors, (and may tempt you to an abject compliance with all their humours,) and that humility which arises from a reverence of God, a consciousness of your own defects, the difficulty of your work, and the knowledge of your character *. This will teach you to bear contempt with dignity, and applause with decency; the latter perhaps you will find not less difficult than the former. Let the knowledge of yourself be your guard against that vanity of mind which will be apt to steal into it when you hear the approbations or commendations of men †. Thus armed with resolution and humility, let your principal care be,

* Laudata est in sacris literis humilitas, damnata superbia; sed est humilitatis genus, quo nihil est detestabilius; est et superbiæ genus, quô nihil laudabilius.

Erasm. Eccles. p. 191.

† Non solum adversus sinistra populi judicia, adversus malitiam etiam piè dicta calumniantium, adversus simultates illorum quibus ob vitam corruptam invisa est veritas, sed etiam adversus acclamationes, & applausus hominum laudantium, debet habere solidum & immobilem spiritum. Id. p. 20.

(1.) To

(1.) To be faithful to God and conscience; and take care that nothing betray you into such a behaviour upon any occasion, for which your own mind will reproach you in secret. And a steady regard to this rule will lead you to decline the most usual and dangerous temptations.

(2.) Let your conduct to all be inoffensive, beneficent and obliging. Make it your practice, and it will be your pleasure, to do some kind office to every one to whom you have a power and opportunity of doing it with prudence. And let the emperor Titus's rule of conduct be yours, Not to let one day pass, if possible, without doing some good to one person or other.

(3.) Visit your people in a kind and friendly manner, as often as it suits with your convenience and theirs *. This is the business of the afternoon:

* "There is an article of great importance, the visiting of our people, with regard to which, I scarcely know what to say, or what rules to suggest; and upon which, therefore, I speak with peculiar diffidence. It is usually, I think, better to be sparing than free in it; though this is a maxim which may occasionally admit of much limitation and restriction; and perhaps too great a neglect of it, is the fault which most prevails in the present day. The propriety of our conduct, must, in many cases, be directed by particular circumstances, of which good sense only can judge.

To

noon: for the whole morning, and as much time as you can redeem at night, should be devoted to

To persons of some rank and fashion, (allowance being made for particular exceptions and friendships, which will occur in all societies) we should seldom go, unless invited; for this will commonly be most agreeable to themselves. As to others, it may be fit to call upon them without ceremony; but then our stay should be short. A due medium ought to be kept between an impertinent freedom and a stiff reserve. We should not forget to render our visits as useful as possible. Something should be thrown in for improvement; something that savours of religion; and this may frequently be done, with superior advantage, in an indirect, than in a formal way." KIPPIS's Charge, p. 26, 27.

"You will soon observe in what places and families you meet with the most proper and encouraging reception, and in which you are most likely to do good." Persons who are frequently ill, and therefore hindered from attending public worship, so often as they wish, are peculiarly worthy of your visits and regard."

Orton's Letters to young Ministers, v. i. p. 196.

Frequent, friendly calls, without waiting for a formal invitation, or subjecting friends to the trouble and inconvenience of a set entertainment, are apt means of conciliating regard, of exciting a mutual interest and affection for each other in the breasts of ministers and people; of affording the former opportunities of dropping useful instruction; and of disposing the minds of the latter to renew their attendance on the discourses of the pulpit with candour and sentiments of deference and friendship. F.

study.

study. Where your visits are most pleasant and profitable, and most expected and desired, pay them most frequently. But where there is any prospect of doing good to any in your flock, there you should sometimes pay your visits, though it be to the poorest persons, and especially when they are in trouble. In all your visits take some opportunity of making moral remarks, or dropping some useful instructions, or leaving some good rule, or religious observation for their benefit. But this must be done not with a magisterial authority, or ministerial air, but with all the freedom and ease imaginable, *en passant*, and when it rises naturally out of the subject of conversation.

(4.) Throw off all affectation, parade, stiffness, morose conceit, reserve, and self-sufficiency. Let your ambition be, to be distinguished by nothing but real goodness, wisdom and benevolence. Be courteous, free, condescending, affable, open, unreserved and friendly to all. But amidst all your freedoms, forget not the dignity and decorum of your character *.

(5.) Circumspectly

* Est autem non vulgaris prudentiæ, sic esse mansuetum erga omnes, ut tamen officii authoritatem tuearis; sic esse familiarem, modestum & comem erga subditos, ut familiaritas & lenitas non pariat contemptum. Erasm. Eccles. p. 166.

(5.) Circumspectly avoid every thing that may give them unnecessary offence, whether by word or conduct, though it be in matters of indifference. You may possibly in point of fidelity be obliged to give them offence in some important

"Let there be no blanks in your life, but let some line or another of wisdom and instruction be written even upon your seasons of relaxation and enjoyment of your friends. Be always upon your guard, even in your most unbending seasons, and remember that the minister of Jesus Christ is a continual character, so that you are not, as persons put on their best garments on the Lord's day but lay them aside in the week, to be clothed with the beauties of holiness in the sanctuary only, but that you are to be adorned with them at all times, and in all places." GIBBON'S Charge at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. KINGSBURY, p. 40, 41.

"Every one must be sensible that there is a decorum belonging to the pastoral office; so that if a person who is engaged in it, enters much into the customs and diversions of the world, he tarnishes the lustre of his reputation, lessens the respect he might have met with, and injures the success of his labours. I am not an advocate for a rigid preciseness: but there is a circumspection highly proper in the christian ministry, especially with regard to indulgences and pleasures which may not, perhaps, be strictly unlawful. There is a candid vigilance of character, which, while it preserves the becoming gravity of the divine, does not depart from a due cheerfulness and liberality of manners."

Kippis's Charge, p. 24. T.

things;

things; in all others therefore you should endeavour to conciliate their esteem and respect. It shews much weakness and little prudence and candour to be obstinate and tenacious of little things, whether modes, customs, or phrases which are offensive to others. It is not walking charitably, nor following the things that make for peace; and is a violation of the apostle's rule of becoming all things to all men*. But see that your charitable conformity do not transgress the laws of sincerity.

(6.) Above all, let your character be a fair copy of the virtues you preach; and let the documents of the pulpit be exemplified in the conduct of your life. A minister should abstain from the appearance of evil; not only from things criminal, but from those which may be interpreted to his dishonour †, and reported to his disadvantage.

* Qui dum omnibus sese accommodat, tam varius est, ut interdum videatur sibi contrarius, cum sibi maximè constet undique. Erasm. Eccles. p. 35.

† "Let me express my dislike of any mean and selfish policy. There are certain little arts which some have practised, and which I think unworthy to be mentioned in this place. Whatever they may be, they ought to be entirely disregarded by the minister of the Gospel. They are unsuitable to that simplicity and openness of character he should

tage *. Vide etiam supra, ch. 2. ad finem.

(Lastly.)

should always maintain; and they are as usually unwise, as they are disreputable." Kippis's Charge, p. 25.

"Take care not to fall into the mischievous, though common practice of gossiping; and be not severe upon the characters of others, since you will be sure to have it returned with interest. In your dress, your common conversation and recreations, attend to what is expedient, and of good report, as well as what is lawful; and do not affect to *despise* the prejudices of weak brethren: for that is not the spirit of a christian minister. Study good manners and affability in your whole behaviour, but let them be tempered with gravity and dignity. Be cheerful and good humoured, but not the fiddle of a company. Be not a recluse, nor yet too frequent a visitor; nor the man of leisure, always ready to fill a place at table, or in a party of pleasure; this will let you down in the esteem, even, of those who seem fond of your company."

Savage's Charge at the Ordination of Mr. Sam. Wilton, p. 84, 85.

"What I would particularly recommend to you, is not to meddle with the secular concerns of your hearers, be not solicitous

* Ecclesiastiæ perpendendum est, quædam ejus esse generis, ut quanquam absint à crimine, tamen quoniam præ se ferunt malam speciem, non absint à criminus suspicione. Ab his quoque circumspectè cavendum est ecclesiastæ——— quæ per se non crimina sunt, tamen maligno vulgo ad obtrectandum quam ad obtemperandum procliviori præbent malè suspicandi malèque loquendi materiam.

Erasm. Eccles. p. 27.

(Lastly.) Be much in prayer for wisdom, strength, prudence and capacity equal to your work and difficulties. This you will find as necessary as your most important studies. But take care

solicitous even to know them, and much less to give your advice with relation to them, as far as it is proper, they will themselves acquaint you with them, if, in a course of time, they shall have formed such an opinion of your integrity and prudence, as to think your counsel desirable. It is not right to take an active part, unless we are requested to do it, in the secular concerns belonging to our congregations as such. In general it will be better to leave affairs of that kind to the management of the deacons and trustees. I have known much uneasiness to arise from an imprudent interference in these matters." Kippis's Charge, p. 25.

"I hope you will guard against admitting into your breast that *love of power*, which might tempt you to usurp upon the rights and religious liberties of your people, or those of your brethren in the ministry. For my part, I know of no power we have as ministers, but to do all the good we can. Do not injure the reputation of others, any more than their property: and shun falling in with the common, though diabolical practice of slandering and backbiting." Savage's Charge, p. 74, 75.

"There is nothing I am more solicitous you should cherish, than that *incoctum generoso pectus honesto*, (*Pers.* Satyr. ii.) which may set you habitually above every thing mean and base: since by such things both the ministry and religion have been brought into great contempt, with some persons of polite education, and generous tempers.

"I entreat

care that your private transactions with God, be very serious, solemn and sincere; and let your endeavours go along with your prayers *.

2. To lay down some particular rules applicable upon extraordinary occasions; or proper to regulate your conduct towards persons of different characters.

(1.) What is a right conduct towards those from whom you have received abuse, contempt, or just cause of offence?

" I entreat you always to maintain an unshaken honesty of heart, an inviolable integrity and honour. Let it govern your conduct in the *common affairs* of life; and then it will preserve you not only from directly infringing the laws of civil society, but from taking advantage of their defects to serve your own interests: and let it govern your conduct as a *minister*. Then you will not aim, under the sanction of that character, and with the advantages it may afford, to thrust yourself into peoples' wills, to the prejudice of their near relations. You will not stoop to any little arts to lessen the reputation, or the congregation of your brethren, in order to increase your own. You will not betray the truths of religion, or the honour of your divine Master, for fear of offending men." SAVAGE's Charge, p. 72, 73, 74. T.

* Ab eo petendum est qui solus largitur vera bona, petendum autem non oscitanter, sed assiduis simul & ardentibus precibus, nec modò votis postulandum est, ut detur, sed bonis etiam operibus ambiendum, ut quod datum est servetur, et indies augescat. Erasm. Eccles. p. 22.

(1.) Your

(1.) Your first care must be to guard your passions *. Keep your temper, and banish all vindictive resentments. If possible, never think of it; but be sure not to harbour the thoughts of it; which will but chafe and corrode the mind to no purpose. Be satisfied with a consciousness of your innocence, and consider the injurious person as an object of your pity rather than indignation. (2.) As you must endeavour to forget the offence; you must not only cease to think, but forbear to talk of it, unless it be with an intimate friend to ask his advice. (3.) You may lawfully decline the company of the person who has thus injured you, and break off a familiar commerce with him, as you cannot look upon him as your friend. But

* "Another thing I would caution against, is a suspicious and jealous disposition; an anxiety to hear what is said of us; and a readiness to take offence at slight matters, and to imagine that we are not treated with sufficient respect. This is a turn of mind, which is fraught with many inconveniences. Neglects will occur in the commerce of life, that often are not intended; or which, at worst, do not proceed from evil designs; but from some accidental situations, or accidental varieties of temper. It is best to go on steadily in our own duty, without being solicitous to know, how far we may be animadverted upon by weak and petulant persons, and without supposing that we shall be blamed by reasonable and worthy men."

Kippis's Charge, p. 26. T.

take

take every opportunity of doing him good that lies in your power. (4.) Embrace the first opportunity and overture of re-establishing a good understanding and renewing your former amity. And (lastly) in all cases of this nature, let it be remembered that the misconduct of others towards you, will not justify yours towards them, that you are still under the same obligations to walk by the rules of that Wisdom which is from above which is first pure, then peaceable, &c.

(2.) What is a right conduct towards narrow, bigoted censorious christians, who are fond of their orthodoxy, and zealously attached to party notions?

(1.) These persons must by no means be disputed with or opposed; because whilst they have much more zeal than knowledge, they are very apt to be warm and angry at any argument that is levelled against their favourite sentiments; and much more if they cannot answer it. Whilst bigotry blinds their minds, they are not capable of seeing the force of an argument; much less of being convinced by it: they should therefore be treated like froward children, or persons in a passion. (2.) Take every opportunity of secretly undermining their false notions, (especially if they be dangerous) by hinting at their bad consequences; or by setting the opposite doctrine of truth in a strong

strong light from scripture. But dwell not long upon it, lest they apprehend themselves particularly aimed at, which they will not fail to resent. (3.) Treat them with the utmost marks of freedom, tenderness and friendship, to convince them that your sentiments of doctrine (though opposite to theirs) create in you no disaffection to them; however theirs may render them disaffected to you. (4.) Endeavour to make them sensible of the much greater importance of those things in which you agree with them; and press them powerfully on their consciences: and when they once come to feel the weight and force of these, they will gradually abate of their zeal for lesser things. This is the only (at least the best and safest) way to convince them, that these things on which they have misplaced their zeal are to be reckoned amongst the *minutiæ* of divinity; for nothing is more natural and common, than for the mind to raise the importance of a subject, in proportion to the zeal it expresses for it. Otherwise it would lie under the constant self-reproach of being governed by a blind irregular zeal. As their zeal for any particular doctrine has fixed the importance of it, before their understanding has precisely weighed it, to go about to argue against that importance would be to argue against their zeal, *i. e.* their passions; which is a very unequal encounter,

encounter, and altogether vain. (5.) Take occasion often to expose the effects of bigotry in other instances to their view, whereby they may possibly become sensible of their own. But let the instances be so distant, (or if near so artfully insinuated) that they may not be sensible of your design. (6.) Come as near to their sentiments as you possibly can, (when your subject leads you that way) and shew them the plain reason why you cannot come nearer. (Lastly) Refer all to plain scripture, and resolve to adhere to that, both for the confirmation of doctrine, and the confutation of error; and by removing their mistaken sense of scripture, open to them the first source of the errors they have imbibed.

(3.) What is a right conduct towards those that are inclined to infidelity?

(1.) As these are but bigots of another rank, they must be treated with the same tenderness, caution and prudence. The latitudinarian and narrow bigot will be equally enflamed by a violent opposition; for they both lay an equal claim to superior wisdom, and eagerly demand (what if you would keep them in humour you must not be backward to pay) some compliment to their own understanding. But (2.) as these are the great champions of Reason, and will admit of no other weapon in the hand of their antagonist, be sure to

to be expert at that, and insist upon it that your adversary uses no other; *i. e.* that he do not put you off with sophistry, paralogism, illusion, equivocation, ridicule, buffoonery, clamour, confidence, passion, or grimace, instead of solid argument and plain reason. Keep him to his point. Admit nothing but what you understand; and nothing but what he understands himself: And take care he do not entangle you in a wood of words, or blind your eyes with dust, or prevent your seeing distinctly the point in hand by holding a cloud before it: or lead you from it by diverting to another subject, when he is pinched and piqued by an argument he cannot answer. (3.) If your adversary be a person of sense, learning and ingenuity, the most effectual method to draw him to your opinion, is by a strong appeal to those good qualities, whereby he will convince himself. (4.) If his self-conceit be unsufferable, and his ignorance ridiculous, it may not be amiss sometimes to mortify the former by exposing the latter. (5.) Insist upon it, that if his regard and esteem for natural religion be sincere, that will engage him to think favourably of the christian institution, which has refined and exalted morality to its utmost perfection; that there is no honest deist (whatever he believes) but would heartily wish christianity to be true. (Lastly.)

If

If you observe him capable of serious impressions, urge him to consider seriously the dreadful risk he runs whilst he pawns his immortal soul upon it that christianity is an imposture: and how unavoidable his ruin, whilst he continues wilfully to neglect it: Because, if christianity be true, the sentence of condemnation denounced against him (by the Great Author of it) for resolving not to believe it, must be also true. Vid. John iii. 36 *.

(4.) How should we conduct ourselves as faithful and judicious ministers towards melancholy, dejected and doubting christians? As this is a frequent case and often attended with no small difficulty; I shall consider it more particularly.

The (1.) thing to be considered, is the true source and original of this melancholy gloom and dejection of mind: Whether it arises from bodily disorder; worldly losses and afflictions; some grievous sin committed; or from an excessive

* "Another regulation of our religious discourse is, not to be too hasty in answering any deistical objection which we have not duly weighed, and a satisfactory solution of which does not occur at the time, you may mention those that have most ably discussed the difficulty: You may consider and consult at your leisure: and prepare yourselves to make a solid reply, with christian meekness, if another fit occasion shall be offered."

Archb. Newcome's Primary Charge, p. 33. T.

apprehensiveness

apprehensiveness and timidity of spirit. Perhaps the person himself may impute it to none of these, but either to the divine desertion, or the buffetings of Satan. But these must carefully be distinguished and explained, because they are frequently mistaken; and then, according to the true source of their spiritual trouble must be your advice and address to them.

If you have reason to believe that the troubled state of their mind is owing principally to a bodily disorder, or some obstruction, or dyscracy of the animal fluids, you should recommend to them a physician, or prescribe them physic, the cold bath, constant employment, or exercise in the air *.

If their sorrow or settled melancholy of mind be the effect of some worldly losses and afflictions, you must endeavour all you can to alleviate it, by shewing them how many ways God can (if he pleases) make up to them the loss they have sus-

* The greater part of those that think they are troubled in mind, are melancholy hypocondriacal people, who, what through some false opinions in religion, what through a foulness of blood, occasioned by their unactive course of life, in which their minds work too much, because their bodies are too little employed, fall into dark and cloudy apprehensions; of which they can give no clear nor good account. Burnet's Past. Care, p. 199.

tained;

tained; how many wise and kind ends may be answered by it; that the scenes of life are variable: After night comes the day. Beseech them to put their hope and trust in God as a gracious and indulgent Father; and urge every topic of consolation proper to be used in a time of worldly adversity.

If the disconsolate state of their mind be the effect of a melancholy constitution, the case is still more difficult, and belongs rather to the physician's department than that of the minister. The latter can have but small hope of administering any proper relief, because the person is not capable of reasoning or thinking justly, and there is something within him that obstructs the avenues to his heart; which must first be removed, before comfort can find its way to it. All that can be done in this case, is to persuade him if you can (of what he will find it very hard to believe) that he sees every thing in a wrong light, and is not at present a competent judge in his own case; and therefore ought not believe his thoughts. Ask him if he never judged more favourably of his spiritual state heretofore than he does now; and whether he was not a more capable judge of his case then, than he is now.

If the trouble of his mind arise from the reproaches of conscience for some grievous sin committed,

mitted, your way is then more direct and plain. If you have reason to believe that this sorrow of heart is the effect of a true penitential remorse, you are then to lay before him every proper topic of consolation the gospel admits, *viz.* the riches of the divine mercy, the merits of the blood of Christ, the extent and efficacy of free grace, the precious promises of the gospel, and the examples of God's mercy and wonderful compassion to humble penitents; and conclude all with an earnest exhortation to trust his soul in the hands of Christ, and to rely on the mercy of God in the way of a steady conscientious obedience.

If it arise from an excessive apprehensiveness and timidity of spirit, and you have cause to believe the person's state is much better than he fears, you are then to fortify and encourage his heart, by referring him to his own past experience of what God has done for his soul; the various tokens of his favour to him in the former scenes of life, and in the several methods of his grace and providence. Urge upon him the exercise of a lively faith encouraged by the grace of the gospel; and convince him, that it is no less wrong and prejudicial for a person to think too ill, than to think too well of himself: that as he is in no danger at all of the latter, advise him for the honour of God, the credit of religion,

and

and his own peace and comfort, to guard against the former, where his greatest danger lies. Again,

If the melancholy and dejected soul have a pious turn, and imputes his present darkness to what he calls divine dereliction, or the *hidings of God's face*, explain that affair to him; and tell him, that his want of that spiritual joy and comfort he once found in his soul may be owing to other causes; the present low state of his spirits, a distemperature of the animal frame, the influence of external objects and accidents, or a concurrence of all these: that nothing is more variable than the frame of the human mind: that we are not to think that God's regards to his own children vary with that; this is a great mistake, and a mistake that is greatly dishonourable to him; that whilst he sees them upright, sincere, humble, obedient, and dependant, his regards to them are always the same, whatever they may think of him; that God never hides his face from his people, till they withdraw their hearts from him; that unless they forsake him he will never depart from them; that the *hidings of God's countenance** (which the psalmist so often complains

* It may be also suggested to melancholy persons, in confirmation of our author's remark, and to illustrate it, that the similar phrase of *God's leaving*, or *forsaking any person* is a Hebrew way of speaking, to signify not withholding any consolatory

plains of) generally if not always refer to the external dispensations of God, or outward providential afflictions, not inward spiritual desertions; when the distress of his circumstances was so great that God might seem to have forgotten and forsaken him, and his enemies might be ready to put that construction upon it.

Lastly, If the person imputes the trouble of his mind to the buffetings of Satan, explain that affair to him. Let him know, that though in some cases that evil spirit may have an agency in creating some spiritual troubles, yet he has no more power over the mind than what it pleases God to give him; that his influence (be it what it will) is controlled and limited; that the most he can do is, to suggest sinful and troublesome thoughts, which we may and ought to repel; that the holy spirit has a counter-agency to inspire good and holy affections: that by indulging to excessive grief and gloomy apprehensions, we give the devil the advantage over us, and even invite his temptations; and finally we ought to take special care to distinguish between the

consolatory or enlivening influences on the mind, but the visitations of any great calamity, without affording immediate help and deliverance. Thus Zion, having been long afflicted is brought in by the prophet, lamenting in this language: "The Lord hath forsaken me," ch. xlix .14. Whitby on Matthew, xxvii. 46. T.

agency of Satan and the operation of natural causes; and not impute those things to the devil, which are owing to our own folly and weakness, or are the physical effects of external objects*.

(5.) What is a right conduct towards the licentious and profane?

(1.) Whilst you behave towards them, with civility and discretion, it will be adviseable to decline

* It should also be urged, that it is with no propriety that the phrase, the *buffeting of Satan* is supposed to signify any impressions on the mind, or any fears and terrors suggested to it by an invisible spiritual agent, when it means in the only passage, in which it occurs, 2 Cor. xii. 7. not any spiritual, inward trouble, but an outward bodily disease; as the Apostle expresseth it "a thorn in the flesh:" and to which he elsewhere refers under the phrase of "the infirmity in his flesh." Gal. iv. 13, 14. 1 Cor. ii. 5. It was something that affected his bodily appearance, that tended to depress him, detracting from the dignity of his presence and the force of his speech. This may justly be regarded as the effect of the abundant visions, with which he was favoured, on the nervous system: and as no otherwise "the messenger of Satan," or the adversary, than as the *false teacher*, ch. xi. 13—15. who availed himself of the Apostle's infirmity and weakness, to undermine his influence and to expose him to contempt. See 2 Cor. x. 10. It may be referred to the judgment even of a person dejected and afflicted in spirits, whether a single text, referring not to a mental trouble but to a bodily infirmity can be a ground for the doctrine, the gloomy and distressing doctrine of satanical buffetings, harassing and tormenting the soul. T.

a particular

a particular intercourse with them. A minister's behaviour towards men should in a good degree be regulated by their moral characters.——(2.) In case they seek your more intimate friendship by kind and benevolent offices, so that gratitude and good manners will not permit you to forbear your visits, you will then have a fair opportunity of insinuating some necessary and gentle admonitions; either by way of story, simile, repartee, raillery, or reproof, suitable to the subject of the discourse or the temper they may be in; which, if it take effect, will prepare your way for a more free and close remonstrance.——(3.) Always open a way to the heart on that side where you find the easiest access. Some are most touched with a sense of honour, and a regard to their reputation; others with a view to their interest; others must be allured by an easy, gentle, rational address; and others will yield to nothing but close and warm reproof: but take particular care to know the ruling passion of the person you address, and, if possible, to bring that over to your side. (4.) Beg of them to erect their hopes, and extend their views as rational beings designed for an immortal existence, and not forget their connexion with another world; for to provide only for the present, and live from hand to mouth, is to act far below the dignity and design of human nature. (5.) If they have any taste for

reading, put into their hands such books as are most suited to their capacity, taste and character. (Lastly.) You should frequently address them from the pulpit. But your public address (while it is strong and animated) must be general, and have nothing in it that is distinguishing or appropriative; that the audience may have no room to think that any one person is particularly intended in the animadversion; for though they will bear to be preached *to*, yet no man loves to be preached *at*.

(6.) How are we to behave towards the grossly ignorant and careless?

(1.) Endeavour to rouse them to a sense of religion and their dependence on God, by a seasonable improvement of some awakening providences; *e. g.* their own sickness, or worldly disappointments; the death of a friend, or some public calamity. (2.) Represent to them the most important and affecting subjects of religion, in the stongest light and plainest language: *e. g.* the shortness of time; the awfulness of eternity; the certainty and near approach of death; and the terrors of the final judgment. (3.) If you find that your conversation is agreeable to them, frequently visit them in a free and friendly manner; and take care that there be nothing dogmatical or authoritative in the advice you give them: but let

let all appear to proceed from a compassionate concern you have for the interest of their souls. (4.) As they are but children in understanding, they must be dealt with as such: put the plainest and most affecting books into their hands; and take care you do not feed them with strong meat, when they stand in need of milk. (5.) It will not be amiss in some part of your sermon (especially in the application) to adapt yourself in particular to their capacity and condition, that they may not only understand but feel what you say; for these sort of hearers (both amongst the high and low) perhaps make a much larger part of our audience than we imagine *.

(7.) What

* To the two preceding classes of character may, with propriety, be applied the observations and advices of Archb. Newcome. "Those that are indisposed to religion," saith this excellent writer, "especially if they be persons of superior rank, it will be difficult to approach at all; much more with direct advice, or even distant insinuations on those serious subjects, which the ordinary laws of conversation exclude. The true way is to conciliate respect and affection by exemplary conduct, by well-placed charities, by instituting, promoting and directing parochial schools of instruction, by the habit of decent condescension and affability to your own inferiors, by a watchful superintendance over every department which properly belongs to a clergyman, and by a character for study and literature. Literary acquisitions

(7.) What is a proper behaviour towards hose who are superior to us in rank and fortune?

(1.) Readily pay them the respect due to their distinction and character. If their temper and conduct be not altogether such as you could wish, yet that will not excuse you from a civil, decent and obliging behaviour towards them. You must remember your duty to others, however they may be deficient in theirs to you. But if they treat you with kindness, friendship and affection, they claim your gratitude, honour and esteem; which will prompt your endeavours to oblige and serve them every way you can. But (2.) be free, open, conversable, and discreetly unreserved before them. Absence of mind, distance of behaviour, formality of address, stiffness of manner, or affected silence is always ungenteel and disgust-

sitions will enable you to direct proper modes of education, and to assist in conducting them: and the best and most engaging books on useful subjects will be thus recommended with weight and authority. Age and experience may execute what youth cannot dare to attempt. A season of affliction or of sickness, may ensure a patient and a willing ear. At all events the good clergyman will watch his opportunity; will guide his actions and words with strict discretion; and will uniformly shew, that like St. Paul, he 'seeks not his own profit, but the profit of others, that they may be saved.'" Primary Charge, p. 30, 31, 32. T.

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ful; and especially in the presence of superiors. (3.) Preserve a generosity and manliness of temper and address; and shew nothing of a mean, low, timid, servile spirit; that is not only dishonourable to your own character, but infers a bad compliment on theirs. They are not tyrants; nor if they were, must you submit to be their slaves. Remember, that if they are sensible and genteel, wise and good, they will consider their superiority to you in one respect, as balanced by that of yours to them, in another; theirs may be most showy, but perhaps yours may be most valuable. (4.) Forget not the dignity and decorum of your character. There is something you owe to that, as well as to the distinction and opulence of your friends. And while this is your guard against incidental levities and a compliance with sinful customs, it is by no means inconsistent with pure wit, innocent humour, and seasonable cheerfulness: which, if attended with good sense and an obliging natural behaviour, will be no less agreeable in the company of your superiors, than in that of your equals. (5.) Do and say all the obliging and agreeable things you can, consistent with truth and conscience and the honour of your function. And then (6.) Take every opportunity of insinuating something (conformable to the duty of your office) which may be serviceable to their spiritual interest,

interest, and helpful to their moral character. (Lastly.) Make a prudent and seasonable use of your interest in them, for the relief of your poor neighbours; whose distresses may be better known to you, than they are to them.

(8.) What is the proper behaviour of a minister towards the poor of his congregation?

This must be regulated by their moral character. (1.) If their character be immoral or profane, as they will not be very fond of your company, they will take no offence if you forbear to visit them; but they should not be wholly neglected. Genteel, kind and candid reproof, prudently and seasonably given, may have a good effect when they come to reflect upon it coolly: and a seasonable relief to them in their distress will add weight to your admonitions, and will give them such impressions of your charity, as will better dispose them to receive your instructions. But (2.) if they be serious and well inclined, and you find yourself agreeable to them, you should frequently call upon them; and though your visits be short, they should be free, friendly, condescending and courteous; and always leave with them some spiritual, moral, or religious instruction, suited to their taste, understanding and circumstances. Be ready to advise and help them in every thing you can. If you see a good heart at bottom, and especially an humble

an humble spirit, make the greatest allowance for their ignorance, prepossession, or infelicity of temper: and when there is need of reproof, let it be preceded by the sincerest expressions of love, and by real acts of friendship. If they are willing to open the state of their souls to you, attend to it with patience and care, that you may administer the most suitable advice and comfort. Have a particular regard to their capacity in your public exhortations. "To the poor the gospel was preached." And as these sometimes make up the bulk of a congregation, and their soul stands as much in need of spiritual nourishment, as those of greater knowledge and comprehension, they should be always "fed with food convenient for them."

(Lastly.) In what manner ought a minister to behave towards those who have fallen into notorious sins?

This must be regulated by the disposition, character and temper of the offender. The sensible and penitent must be treated one way, the obstinate and impenitent another. The following method in general will perhaps be found to be the most prudent and effectual.

(1.) Previous to all reproof should be a circumstantial knowledge of the fact you reprove. (2.) Be sure that it be criminal or indiscreet, and that the person guilty, is or ought to be sen-

sible of it: for if you reprove him for what he is not guilty of, or what he is not sensible there is any harm in, he will probably retort upon you the charge of censoriousness. If there be guilt and indiscretion in his conduct, and he not sensible of it, your business then is to convince him of it; and how much injury he may do his character by inadvertently allowing those things as fit and innocent, which are not so in him. Let your arguments in proof of the guilt be taken from the circumstances of the fact; the character and relation he bears in life; the opinion of wise and judicious men; the nature of things; and the testimony of scripture. And then (3.) See that your reproofs be not too severe. I do not mean more severe than the offender would chuse, but more severe than the nature and circumstances of the case require; or more severe than is necessary for the justification of your fidelity, and the reformation of the sinner.

Too great severity towards tender minds does more harm than good. See Gal. vi. 1. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted *."

(4.) Take

* Ου γαρ απλως, &c. You must not only proportion your reproofs to the nature of the offence, but to the disposition of

(4.) Take care lest, through a fear of offending your brother, you do not offend God by a want of faithfulness. Prov. xxvii. 6. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend." It is the greatest piece of friendship you can do him, and if he is wise he will think it so, and more highly esteem you for it. Psal. cxli. 5. "Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness." (5.) Let your reproof appear to flow from your love to him, and be administered with the utmost tenderness and wisdom.*. (Lastly.) Leave not your offending brother without proper directions for a better conduct.

of the offender; lest while you mean to heal the breach, you make the rent worse; and in rectifying one fault, occasion a greater. Chrysostom de Sacerdotio, l. 2. p. 150.

* There may be ways fallen upon of reproving the worst men in so soft a manner, that if they are not reclaimed, they shall not be irritated or made worse by it; which is but too often the effect of an indiscreet reproof. By this a minister may save the sinner's soul; he is at least sure to save his own, by having discharged his duty towards his people. Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 194.

It must be observed also that "personal admonition should be given secretly, and with expressions of tenderness and respect."——Common discretion further dictates, that intercourse of this nature should never be divulged, or insinuated in the most distant manner. Primary Charge, p. 34, 35. T.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX *.

CONCERNING THE DIFFICULTIES A MINISTER MUST EXPECT TO MEET WITH IN THE EXECUTION OF HIS OFFICE; AND HIS PROPER SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT UNDER THEM.

SOME of these may arise,

(1.) From your own natural temper, which may render you indisposed or unapt to some particular parts of the ministerial office. But the most difficult duties by becoming a habit, become easy.

(2.) No

* Among the difficulties, on which a minister, particularly a protestant dissenting minister, should count, is a scanty and precarious income, dependent on the voluntary contributions of the people, and sometimes dispensed with a reluctant mind and a niggardly hand. A straitness of circumstances is itself a trial to a generous mind; and, sometimes, exposes even merit to neglect, if not contempt. It

(2.) No small difficulty may arise from the resolution and labour requisite to put some of the fore-mentioned rules into execution, but this difficulty will in like manner diminish as this course becomes habitual. "In all other professions, those

It more sensibly affects the spirits, when it is contrasted with the wealth and splendour, which offer in other walks of life. Good sense will however reflect, and experience will confirm the observation, that such is the lot of mankind, no advantages can be secured, without some correspondent evil; and no benefit also can be given up, but the want of it is counterbalanced by some good. The minister foregoes the lucrative prospects and emoluments of this world: but he is not without his peculiar satisfactions and rewards. The ministry will not enrich him: but it offers the pleasure and reputation of science and literature: it is accompanied with peculiar advantages for mental culture: it leads into a large acquaintance with divine truth: it, particularly assists the improvement and perfection of the moral character and the pursuit of immortality. If worldly emolument and riches be not secured by it, it is to be considered, that these are not the objects that he who assumes the character of the christian minister proposes to himself. In doing this he virtually relinquishes the gay and splendid distinctions of this world, and shall he be dispirited and complain because he does not secure what has not, and ought not to be his aim! He supplies the want of worldly encouragement by the aids of devotion and the supports of faith. He seeks his reward in the "crown of glory," which he hopes to receive from the hands and munificence of "the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls." T.

who

who follow them, labour in them all the year long; and are hard at their business every day of the week: and shall ours only, that is the noblest of all others, make the labouring in our business an objection against any part of our duty *?" In proportion as our heart is engaged in the work, the difficulty of it will grow less, and our delight in it greater.

(3.) Another discouragement may arise from the seeming singularity of this character; and the general neglect which ministers of all denominations discover of the duties belonging to the sacred function: what you do out of conscience they may impute to affectation, which instead of procuring their esteem, may create their envy. But "It is a small matter to be condemned in the day that man judgeth you," since you will be acquitted another day, when he that "judgeth you will be the Lord;" which is the proper import of that passage, 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. Or,

(4.) From the little success you meet with, notwithstanding all your most earnest endeavours to promote the spiritual interest, and eternal happiness of mankind †. But your future acceptance and reward

* Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 207.

† A minister often forms too partial, as well as too discouraging an estimate of his usefulness and success. His labours

reward will not be in proportion to the success, but the sincerity of your endeavours *.

(5.) Your

* Vid Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 212, 213.

labours operate with a silent, though not an ostentatious effect. Encouraging as well as beautiful is the representation and emblem of this matter given by our Lord. "The kingdom of God," saith he, "is as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how: for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear: but when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Mark, ii. 26, 29. Not by immediate and visible effects only, are we to judge of our success. Though no careless sinner should be awakened and converted: many enlightened, serious and virtuous christians may be confirmed, comforted and edified. The great precepts of righteousness and the solemn sanctions of religion, on which the minister preaches, have a witness to their truth and an advocate for their importance in the bosom of every hearer. While he speaketh, conscience speaketh within: while he addresseth the ear, the heart goeth along with him. The ground is prepared: and the seed, that is sown, will sooner or later spring up, and, in different proportions yield fruit. Miraculous conversions are not to be expected; but on the sure and gradual operation of divine truth he may cheerfully depend. The minister doth not know the effects of his labours, because it doth not fall in his way to trace their influence on the tempers and lives of men, nor to converse with those who could inform him of the impressions made by them; but a future

day

(5.) Your own weakness and infirmities both of body and mind, may throw fresh discouragements in your way, but these will be graciously allowed for; and God requires of none more than they have received. If we have received but one talent, he does not expect so much from us, as from those on whom he has bestowed ten.

(6.) The ministerial character itself may subject you to the contempt of some profane men. But if you adorn it by the useful, upright conversation before described, it is great odds but you secure their esteem and respect; if not, their continued contempt is your real honour.

day will disclose all things; and testimonies to his success will present themselves to his honour and joy.

In one respect the minister may assure himself of a certain and important good effect from his services in the cause of christianity. They cannot fail to perpetuate and hand down the knowledge of that gospel, which will be the light of future ages and the source of salvation to unborn generations. He is a witness to the truth at present, and is an instrument of Providence in transmitting down to future times, that divine word which is not only the power of God to the salvation of those who embrace and obey it, but which by its gradual and improving influence will carry the human race to heights of refinement and improvement, if not to perfection, of which we have now but very inadequate conceptions. Every application to study, every sermon hath this tendency, hath its share and degree of influence in bringing about this final happy state of things. T.

(7.) From

(7.) From the different tempers, tastes, dispositions and opinions of the people. But how you are to behave with regard to these has been shewn before; and no small degree of prudence is required in this case *.

In a word, every view of the nature, difficulty and dignity of your office, may furnish you with a proper motive and direction to a right behaviour in it †. No valuable end can be pursued without some obstruction, nor obtained without some difficulty. Your employment is truly honourable and important; and your encouragement, advantage and assistance, more than equal to the labour it requires. If you be found faithful you shall not fail of a distinguished recompence, from the bountiful hand of that Good Master in whose service you are engaged: and a careful observation and practice of those rules of pastoral conduct before

* Nunc si reputemus in eodem populo, quanta sit varietas sexuum, ætatum, conditionis, ingeniorum, opinionum, vitæ, institutionis, consuetudinis, quantâ oportet esse præditum prudentiâ ecclesiasticen, cui sit temperanda oratio! Erasm. Eccles. p. 36.

† Ab humi repentibus curis erigat animum tuum, considerata functionis dignitas: a prevaricatione deterreret delegantis severitas: Socordiam excludat suscepti muneris difficultas: Industriam ac vigilantiam exstimulet præmii magnitudo, quod non ab hominibus, sed a Deo erit expectandum, Id. p. 193.

laid

laid down, will (by the blessing of God) at once adorn your character, increase your honour, exalt your present joy, and enhance your future reward *.

* Quam lætitiam, quam exultationem, quod repudium credimus esse in pectore fidelis ecclesiastæ, dum repetat quæ animas ipsius ministerio, dominus satanæ tyrannidi subtractas sibi vindicarit! Erasm. Eccles. p. 14.

A LETTER

A

LETTER

TO

A FRIEND

UPON HIS ENTRANCE

ON THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE.

DEAR SIR,

You desire my sentiments on a very delicate and important subject; which I should enter upon with the greater pleasure were I sensible that my abilities were in any degree proportioned to my zeal to serve you. But however doubtful I be of the former, that you may not have the least ground to suspect the latter, I have, in confidence of your candour, sent you a few thoughts which occurred to my mind in answer to this interesting question—In what manner you must conduct yourself, that you may accomplish the great purposes of the sacred ministry, to which you have lately been so solemnly ordained?

As

As I doubt not but the question came from a very honest heart, so I hope, in my answer to it, you will indulge me that freedom which not only friendship, but the nature of so important a subject demands.

But one thing, sir, I beg leave to premise, (viz.) that for all, and every particular, I am now about to recommend to you, I refer you entirely to the authority of scripture, the nature of things, and the dictates of right, impartial reason: and if any thing should drop from me which you do not see, upon diligent search, to be conformable to these sacred and invariable standards, I desire that no regard may be paid to it; if you do, I doubt not, sir, but your own conscience will resume this office after me, and in a more effectual manner reinforce the exhortation.

All that I have to propose may be comprised under three general heads, relating to

Your personal conduct.

Your private studies. And

Your public ministrations.

1. Give me leave to submit to your consideration a few practical rules relative to your future conduct in the ministerial office.

You are now, sir, to appear in the world under a character which (however despised by some) is in itself truly honourable. Your care then should be

be to maintain it with consistency and credit; which will at once shew your good sense, piety and wisdom.

It must be owned, it is no easy matter immediately to give into all the decorums of a new character. The difference between that of an *academic* and that of a *pastor* is so great, and the transition from one to the other is sometimes so sudden, and this usually at an age when the mind is unstable and unexperienced, that young pastors have reason to expect, and their people as much reason to make, very candid allowance for some smaller improprieties. However you will please to remember that the honour you expect from the ministerial character will always be given in proportion to the dignity with which you support it. If you adorn *that*, that will not fail to adorn *you*.

Quid verum atque decens, curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum *, to be wholly intent on truth and decorum, is as good a rule as any you can take for your general conduct. As to more particular directions for your ministerial behaviour, I would advise you to keep the great ends of your ministry always in view, viz. the glory of God; the honour of the Redeemer; the interest of the gospel;

* Hor. Epist. l. 1.

gospel; the salvation of immortal souls; and your own future approbation and reward, when you shall be called to give an account of your charge to "Jesus Christ the chief shepherd, their Lord and yours." These you are to consider not as separate but as conjunct, co-ordinate ends; to which all your other views and pursuits must be subservient. These are the grand objects you are never to lose sight of. However the scenes of life may vary, whatever circumstance the providence of God may hereafter bring you into, let this be your invariable view, to do every thing which may promote, and to avoid every thing which may obstruct, these great purposes of the ministerial function.

(1.) Let me desire you to pay a particular regard to those things which are apparently subservient to the great ends of your ministry. Will you give me leave briefly to specify a few?

Preserve then, sir, the highest reverence, the most sacred and punctilious regard for the holy scripture as the only standard of your faith and worship. Maintain the dignity of its doctrines, the purity of its institutions, and the solemnity of its sanctions, with all your wisdom, zeal and knowledge. Remember that you are "set for the defence of the gospel." Keep that therefore ever in

in your eye as the copy of your ministerial instructions, and the charter of your religious privileges.

Be no less careful to cultivate the temper than to increase the furniture of your mind. The former will lay the foundation of much solid peace and self-possession, whilst the latter will supply you with a rich store of useful notions; whereby you will "be well instructed unto the kingdom of Heaven; and be like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old *."

Study moderation in all things. Nothing will more subserve your usefulness, reputation and peace. Extremes are always dangerous, often pernicious: none but persons of the strongest passions and weakest minds run into them. Health, truth, wisdom, virtue, are all to be found in the mean: excess impairs or obscures them all.

Let love and lenity be your ruling temper. This softens and meliorates the passions; leads to a kind, christian, beneficent conduct; and will effectually prevent your giving unnecessary offence. And that you may not be in danger of taking it,

Fortify your mind with meekness and wisdom. There is a certain degree of insensibility under some

* Matt. xiii. 52.

some seeming injuries, (a sure indication of a great or christian mind) which for your own peace you ought carefully to cultivate. You will find a weight of sentiment in that stoical aphorism if you ponder it well, ταράσσει τὸς ἀνθρώπους ὐ τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων δόγματα*; that it is not things but thoughts that hurt us. Or in case of a supposed indignity, it is the workings of our own mind that gives us the pain, not the injury or affront we received; which perhaps, after all, was never intended.

Let prudence shine in all your actions. This will give a grace, a beauty and consistency to your whole conduct. Directed by this, how amiable and useful are some persons of small parts and scanty furniture! whilst others with fine talents, great learning, and no prudence, render themselves not only useless, but contemptible. In every situation of things, consider first, what is fit in itself; and then, what is most becoming your own character.

Lay no stress upon trifles. This always shews either a weak and narrow, or a sour capricious mind; is the great source of bigotry and uncharitableness, will impede your usefulness, and render you disesteemed by men of wisdom and true judgment.

* Epict. Enchir. c. x.

judgment. Be sure to adjust your regards to things in proportion to their real importance. Extend this rule to all your practice, and apply it to all your principles. Be indifferent to those things which are indifferent in themselves. And I think you will not be much mistaken if you look upon those things as indifferent in themselves, wherein you see many wise, sober, and pious christians differ. But on the other hand,

Beware lest under a colour of latitude and liberty you transgress the bounds of truth and duty. Dare to maintain the essential principles of religon, whoever may oppose them; and to practise the christian rules of conduct, whoever may despise them. There is a noble, just and wise singularity, which on some occasions you must not be ashamed of. In so dissolute and giddy an age as that in which we live, when men seem so strangely bent on carrying things to extremes either of enthusiasm or infidelity, it will be well for you if you be not sometimes put to the trial of all your fortitude, zeal and wisdom, to stem the tide of bigotry and delusion on the one hand, or of profaneness and vice on the other. But on such occasions, sir, remember that you "are set for the defence of the gospel;" that this was one part of the charge you received when you was solemnly ordained to the service of it; and that it

is your duty and honour to appear in vindication of deserted truth and virtue: but let it always be with a spirit of benevolence, meekness and love.

Magnify your office. By which I do not mean that you should entertain those exorbitant notions concerning the dignity of the sacred function, which prompt to priestly pride, and a lordly domination over the rights of conscience; which instead of magnifying, never fail to diminish the ministerial character, and expose it to just contempt. As a minister of the gospel you are not to "exercise dominion over the faith" of christians, but to be a "helper of their joy." But when I advise you to magnify your office, what I mean is only this; that you would endeavour to possess your mind with so just a conception of the honour and importance of your employment, and the glorious reward promised to your fidelity, as may raise you above the difficulties of your work and inspire you with a proper zeal and fortitude in the prosecution of it.

For difficulties and discouragements, sir, you must expect to meet with, arising from constant application to study; from the various labours of your function (and you will very probably find some necessary duties of it much more difficult than others); from the different taste and tempers of

of your people; from the tongue of scandal; from the little success of your ministrations; from the contempt of enemies; and you will be very happy if you meet with no trouble from the foibles and follies of your friends. Expect these sort of difficulties then, and prepare to meet them.

But do not aggravate or increase them; by impatience, indiscretion, or an exquisite sensibility of disrespect. Throw the mantle of love over the weaknesses of your friends, and bear with a christian heroism the malevolence of your enemies.

Cultivate a fraternal regard for all your regular, wise, worthy and useful brethren in the sacred ministry, of whatever denomination they be. Envy not those who have greater talents then yourself; nor despise those that have less. Disesteem none purely for his differing from you in his opinions, provided those opinions be innocent, and innocently held: for they have just the same reason to alienate their esteem from you. Believe that they may be sincere, pious, faithful, accepted ministers of the gospel, and be leading many souls to heaven and glory, though it be not precisely in the same track in which you choose to walk yourself. And if upon the whole you discover in them the true christian life and temper, do not censure their mistakes or defects with a severity with which

you would not choose to hear others animadvert upon your own.

Lastly. Be much in prayer and self-conference. Study daily, endeavour after, and pray for more of the gift and spirit of prayer: not only a fluency of expression, but a freedom of thought; not only an enlargement of mind, but an energy of spirit. No requests fly swifter to the throne of grace than those which come immediately from the heart. Such a gift and spirit of prayer once attained, will greatly strengthen, animate and assist you in your public addresses to God; and a frequent self-converse will be no less helpful to you in your ministerial addresses to your people. For pious christians feel all of them much the same desires, difficulties, defects, wants, weaknesses, and workings of mind; and therefore by being well acquainted with your own, you will better know how to apply yourself to theirs; and, let me say, to apply to them in the best manner too. They will then feel what you say; and feel it more sensibly when they see you felt it first yourself. These two things therefore I would especially recommend to you, as more immediately subservient to your ministerial comfort and success.

You will indulge my fidelity, dear sir, whilst I proceed.

(2.) To

(2.) To give you a candid caution against some of those things which will as certainly obstruct and frustrate those ends. I mean them not by way of admonition, but of salutary caution.

In the first place then, beware of indolence and self-indulgence. They are strangely deceived who take sanctuary in the church for idleness and ease, or who fly to the altar as an asylum from labour *. A minister's life should be always that of a student. You have quitted the academy, sir, but not your studies: you have only altered the course of them. And in what manner they are to be conducted in order to answer the great ends of the gospel ministry, I shall endeavour presently to shew you.

Again,

* "If men had the spirit of their calling in them, and a due measure of flame and heat in carrying it on, labour in it would rather be a pleasure than a trouble. In all other professions, those who follow them labour in them all the year long, and are hard at their business every day in the week. All men that are well-suited in a profession which is agreeable to their genius and inclinations, are really the easier, and the better pleased, the more they are employed in it. Indeed there is no trade or course of life, except ours that does not take up the whole man. And shall ours only, that is the noblest of all others, and that has a *certain* subsistence fixed upon it, and does not live by contingences and hopes, as all others do, make the labouring in our business an objection against any part of our duty?"

Bp. Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 182. T.

Again, beware of sensual pleasures. They have, (I own) a very powerful attraction, not easily resisted by persons in younger life. Indeed if they are in themselves innocent, the moderate and seasonable use of them ought not to be thought inconsistent with your station and character. But be they ever so innocent or lawful, take care they do not possess you: for they will but retard your wiser pursuits, and become very troublesome intruders into your better engagements. Throw the double curb of religion and reason on those appetites and passions, which unrestrained will run away with the judgment, overset the mind, and perhaps wound the conscience in their mad career.

Beware of vanity, and the secret insinuations of self-applause. Set not too great a value on yourself for any particular talents or capacities with which it may please God to distinguish you. Silence all such vain self-assuming thoughts with this single question, What hast thou which thou hast not received? The more thou hast received, the more thou hast to answer for.

Beware of giving offence to any, either by your temper, conduct or doctrine. A disregard to this maxim will be a great bar to your usefulness. When once a people have conceived a disgust against their minister, they are ill-disposed to receive any real good from his ministrations. Much

prudence

prudence, forbearance, candour, compliance, self-denial, and condescension, you may possibly find requisite to keep well with some. And if by these means you still retain a capacity of doing good to their souls, you have reason to esteem it a cheap and honourable purchase. And never think the gratification of a humour too dear a sacrifice to peace.

Finally, beware of the influence of a warm, narrow, uncharitable spirit; or a bigoted attachment to any particular party. This (we too, too often see) corrodes the very vitals of genuine piety, and does unspeakable hurt to the true christian interest. And the more, as it hides itself under the name and semblance of (what is quite another thing) a "zeal for God and truth." Ever give others the same liberty of differing from you in sentiments, which you take in differing from them. This they will always expect; and methinks they very reasonably may.

I beg your indulgence, sir, whilst I now

(2.) Submit to your consideration a few brief directions relating to the method and management of your studies.

Be always intent on the improvement of your mind, by reading, writing, conversation, and reflection; and let every day add something to your literary furniture. To that end "purchase back again.

again the seasons *" you have lost; which is the import of the apostle's expression, Ephes. v. 16. that is, take much care to attain, and more to improve every opportunity of gaining or doing some real good.

I would advise you to take a scope and latitude in your studies; which will at once enlarge and entertain the mind. "Try all things, and hold fast that which is good." If you read only in one way, you will never think in any other. This will extremely cramp, contract, and by degrees torpify your faculties. If you seek for treasure hid in a field you should not confine your search to one corner of it.

Aim at some eminence in your studies. The higher ground you stand upon, the larger prospect will you have, and the better judgment will you form of things around you. Partial and contracted views will always lead you to judge amiss.

Some of your youthful studies you will now of course dismiss; as what were only preparatory to those of more essential importance. Others I would advise you to pursue; and as you have leisure, endeavour to make still farther improvements in them. Nor would I have you confine yourself to your academic plan, but launch out

* Ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρὸν.

into

into other branches of literature, that are not foreign from, but ornamental to your character, and subservient to your usefulness. And in your choice of these, your own temper, taste and genius (to which you should carefully attend) will, under proper corrections, be your best guide. For you will always make the most speedy progress in that kind of science you are most inclined to. However be sure to distinguish between those sort of studies which serve only for amusement, and those which are conducive to solid improvement; and take care that the former do not intrench upon the latter.

If you have a taste for polite letters, indulge it. They will not only entertain, but open and dilate the mind; and supply it with a rich fund of proper images and expressions, which may sometimes be very happily adapted to your great purpose. I see not why an elegant phrase may not convey the most warm and pious sentiments to the heart. Some hearts they will reach much sooner by such a conveyance.

Imitate every author in his peculiar excellence. You will find none to exceed Dr. Tillotson in simplicity, Mr. Addison in purity, Mr. Melmoth in elegance, or Dr. Young in force of expression. If you have a taste for solid, rational devotion read Mr. Locke, Dr. Lucas, Dr. Scott, and Mr. Grove:

but if you have a greater relish for rapturous piety, you will be more entertained by Mr. Hervey, Mr. Norris, Dean Stanhope, Dr. Watts, and Mrs. Rowe. For a just elevation and refinement both of sentiment and style, I would refer you to all the works of Mr. Rollin, and the Archbishop of Cambray. From any of these, or such as these, take your model, as your own genius may direct. To form a true taste, you must be well acquainted with them all.

The elegant entertainment you have often received from the fine and solid sense of the best classical writers, I am persuaded will be argument sufficient with you not to drop your acquaintance with them: and your improvements from them, and relish for them, will always be in proportion to the degree wherein you enter into their genuine spirit and beauties.

And think not it will be any prejudice to your good taste and judgment to be conversant with the best christian writers of primitive antiquity. But have immediate recourse to those writers themselves. And this I would recommend as an universal rule; always drink at the fountain head, when you can get at it: *dulcius ex ipso fonte bibuntur aquæ.* Four advantages you will receive from a good acquaintance with the early fathers: viz. a just, comprehensive knowledge of primitive antiquity:

antiquity: a clear view of the difference between pure and corrupt christianity; with a greater ability to defend the one and expose the other: a more extensive knowledge of human nature: and a growing improvement in the language in which they write. I will venture to say that in some of the fathers of the three first centuries (particularly Origen, Clemens Alexandrinus, Lactantius, Justin, Minutius, and Turtullian) you will find such a vast mine of literature, and knowledge of pagan mythology (especially in their apologies) as will at once surprise and entertain you; and make it worth your while to get acquainted with them. But beyond the third century I would not advise you to proceed without great caution. Thus far the stream runs tolerably pure. Beyond this you will meet with troubled waters.

The study of ecclesiastical history, both ancient and modern, hath a close connexion with, and will be very subservient to many valuable purposes of the sacred office. There is one truth it will most certainly convince you of (and there is no way whereby you can be so effectually convinced of it as this) I mean, the danger and mischief of a warm misguided zeal, a low narrow contracted spirit, and a blind bigoted attachment to a particular scheme of opinions, or the distinguishing modes

modes and tenets of a party, in neglect of the great essential principles of Christianity itself: The fruitful source of all that unchristian violence, obloquy, persecution, malignity and malice, among those who professed the gospel of peace, with which the annals of the church have in every age been so dreadfully disgraced and blackened.

Above all, sir, I recommend to you a critical skill in the sacred languages. By which I mean a thorough insight into the peculiar idioms and phraseology of the original scriptures; by comparing them with those of other ancient writings, and the other oriental tongues; collating the several versions of the sacred books; consulting the best critics; and especially by comparing the sacred scriptures with themselves. Read some portion of the originals every day. But be sure to avoid that fantastical (shall I call it, or rather phrensical) humour which some discover, of finding out a deep, recondite sense, and mystical meaning in Hebrew words, which was never before heard or thought of; on which they not only establish old theological mysteries, but form new philosophical systems. These men aim to revive among us the ancient spirit of cabalism, as our modern Hernhuters actually have that of Montanism: But both (if I mistake not) have far surpassed their originals; and

and have carried their respective tenets and principles to a degree of absurdity which the old Jewish and Christian enthusiasts never once thought of.

Make all your reading and all your studies subservient to the great ends of your sacred function. Remember that divinity is the study to which you have consecrated your time and talents. Above all then study your bible, and take all your divinity from thence. Dwell at the spring-head. Drink deep at the fountain of eternal truth. Furnish yourself with a variety of commentators, but make not too liberal a use of them. To lean always on crutches is the way never to go alone. To consult all the various glosses and constructions which the several commentators have put upon any particular part of scripture will rather confound than satisfy you, and involve your mind in more smoke than light: at best both will be so blended together as to cause a very confused glare, and give you at last only a faint, imperfect view of the truth. When you are once furnished with a good critical skill in the original languages, and have attained a familiar acquaintance with the particular phraseology of the sacred writers, I believe you will find (as I frequently have myself) that reading over a paragragh of scripture two or three times attentively, both in the original and translation,

translation, and comparing it with the main subject or argument the inspired author treats of, and attending to the connexions, digressions, parentheses, and disjunctions of his discourse, will strike out a clearer and better light than consulting a whole shelf of sacred critics.

In order to be well established in the grounds of Christianity, and in the great principles of Christian liberty, you will do well to converse with some of our best writers against the deists and papists. But as for theological controversy in general (especially considering the manner in which it is too often conducted) you will find in it so great a mixture of vanity, confidence, ill-temper, wrong zeal, and fine-spun laboured trifles, as have but few charms to attract a judicious, free, benevolent mind. You will commonly see exemplified, on both sides, most of those particulars which the excellent Mr. Howe so well observes to make up the "carnality of religious contention *." If your pursuit be solid wisdom, you must expect but small improvements from polemical theology, which commonly strikes out more heat than light. The more you enter into the vital parts of religion, the less esteem, I am persuaded, you will have for

* See Howe's Works, vol. ii. p. 208, &c.

those

those mystical subjects and low methods of modern debate which warm many a good man's head, but often warp his heart.

Study a facility and readiness of expression on all subjects; which will be a mighty advantage to you in discoursing on the most important. I remember to have met with the observation of some pious and ingenious divine (I think it was Mr. Scougal) "That what he deemed as a principal advantage and fruit of all his reading and study was, a habit he had acquired of conveying all his ideas in easy, proper language."

Observe an order and method in the management of your studies, and the employment of your time; allotting such hours in the day, or such days in the week, for one kind of study, and such for another. This will not only facilitate your progress, but diversify your labours, and take off the *tædium* which attends a too long application to the same track of thought; whilst you still pursue your main end, and make new accessions to your mental furniture.

And now, sir, accept

(3.) A few short directions relative to your public ministrations, and I have done.

Dwell most on the most important subjects. The most plain and practical are generally such.

Study

Study edification more than elegance: and seek the character of a serious and instructive rather than that of an ingenious and popular preacher *.

If your language be decent, plain and proper, do not be too solicitous to adorn it: it will be apt to make your early compositions too stiff and finical. By an overload of expression many a good writer weakens and obscures the sense. Aim rather at a concise and nervous, than a fine and florid stile.

Lay more stress on the thought than the phrase. Your hearers will expect it: If that strike them, this will not disgust them. But above all take care of losing them and yourselves in a wood of words.

* The practice of Sir James Stonhouse, may be mentioned here. "I have lately been employed in writing some short *expositions on select passages* of scripture, and have preached them at *All-saints*; which have been taken notice of, as more improving than common sermons. I would on experience strongly recommend this method to you. Choose some interesting passage: give the meaning of each verse: then the practical use of it: and conclude with a general exhortation or spirited address or some striking inferences. Much depends on the *choice* of passages to be expounded. *No* sermons are equally useful with expository sermons: None take less pains to compose; none are so well liked."

Letters to the Rev. Thomas Stedman, v. ii. p. 89, 101, 169. T.

Let your delivery be serious, grave, decent, distinct, lively, but unaffected *.

Shun the unnecessary use of obnoxious and offensive phrases. You will find every party fond of their own peculiar modes of expression, and averse to those of their adversaries; without sufficiently attending sometimes to the true sense and propriety of either. Avoid this snare. Examine the true meaning and import of them all; and tye yourself down to none: but choose those which are most proper, pertinent and easy, to whatever party they happen to belong. And if the most proper and pertinent words are somewhat obscure or liable to be mistaken, explain them.

* Mr. GARRICK, on having heard Dr. STONHOUSE read prayers and preach, at a church in the city, asked the doctor, after the service, what particular business he had to do when the duty was over; "None," said the other. "I thought you had," said GARRICK "on seeing you enter the reading desk in such a hurry."—"Nothing (added he) can be more indecent, than to see a clergyman set about sacred business as if he were a tradesman, and go into the church as if he wanted to get out of it as soon as possible."

He next asked the doctor, "what books he had in the desk before him?" "*Only* the bible and prayer-book."—"*Only* the bible and prayer-book" replied the player; "why you tossed them backwards and forwards, and turned the leaves as carelessly as if they were those of a day-book and ledger." Letters to the Rev. Thomas Stedman, vol. ii. p. 52, 53. T.

In

In all your public ministrations keep the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel always in view. Consider Christian religion as a divine scheme to recover an apostate race of creatures from guilt and ruin to holiness and happiness, through Jesus Christ, the great mediator. This will often lead your mind to the doctrines of grace; and direct you to pay an habitual regard to those two important articles of our faith, the propitiation of Christ, and the influence of his spirit. Doctrines which I am persuaded will never come into disrepute with any who make an impartial use of their bibles, and desire to see Christianity a consistent scheme *.

Study

* It may be supposed, that the worthy author affixed to the terms the *propitiation of Christ* and the *influences of the Spirit*, ideas that cannot meet the assent of some judicious, careful and pious inquirers into the meaning of the scriptures. They, with grateful devotion admit our dependence upon GOD, as the "author of every good and perfect gift, who giveth wisdom liberally, and who worketh in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure!" they also grant in the words of Bishop Hurd, that "it pleased God to give us eternal life, only in his Son, and in his Son only as suffering and dying for us." Are not these Christians to be classed with those who "make an impartial use of their bibles and who desire to see Christianity a consistent scheme:" though they understand the term, *propitiation*, to be applied to the death

Study the religious taste of your hearers, and suit yourself to it, so far as you prudently and honestly can, for their edification. You will probably find a great diversity in their temper and judgment; some more pleased with a close and rational, others with a warm and animating strain of preaching; some chusing to have their mind instructed and their judgment improved, others to have their thoughts elevated and their passions warmed. Nor will you find their affections all

death of Christ in a figurative sense; and explain those numerous texts in the new testament, that speak of the *Spirit*, the *Holy Spirit* and the *Spirit of God*, as meaning miraculous powers and gifts. It is to be regretted, that from so candid and sensible a writer as Mr. Mason, there should, in the above and other passages, escape intimations that are scarcely to be justified but on the supposition of the infallibility of those who drop them; and approximate too nearly to that spirit of *creed-making*, which has been the bane of the Christian church. I may be allowed to add, that though the term "propitiation" and other "sacrifical" terms, when applied to the death of Christ, are understood in a metaphorical and figurative sense, it by no means follows, that a *meaning* and a very important meaning is not assigned to them. All just metaphors and figures are the language of good sense; and point to a strong resemblance in some respect, though the subject, to which they are applied does not in all respects correspond to that from which they are borrowed: as when our Lord calls himself a "door," the "good shepherd" and the "true vine." T.

excited

excited the same way. The string which strikes the sweetest harmony into one, will jar in the ears of another. The way to excite a true pathos is—first to gain over the understanding of your hearers by a full, distinct and clear proof of your subject; then by displaying the importance of it; then leading them to self-conviction by a soft insinuating address to the conscience; after this all the most bold and spirited efforts of oratory will be admitted, and fix the impression deep in their hearts: whilst they believe their passions are kindled not so much by the art and oratory of the speaker, as by the vast importance of the subject he treats.

This method will seldom fail to animate the coldest heart, and to quicken a genuine flame in the warmest. But scorn to raise a false fire, by adapting the arts of false oratory to a false taste.

Affect not to move the passions on every subject. This is the same fault in composition, as a loud, uniform tone of voice is in elocution, and will excite no other passion in the judicious hearer, but a contempt of the speaker.

Be very charitable to the weak ones in your flock. If you observe in any of them some little bigoted attachments, forbear to oppose them. Perhaps you may meet with *(mollia tempora fandi)* some

some fair and favourable opportunities of opening and disabusing their minds, before they are aware. Bigotry is a disease much better cured by gentle means than violent: a fort much easier taken by sap than storm. Perhaps you may meet with some who confound practical with legal preaching; who have never learned to distinguish between personal holiness and self-righteousness; and depreciate Christian piety under the name of works; by mistaking the sense of that word in the apostle Paul's Epistles. Convince them of that mistake if you can; if not, bear with them; but arm them against the danger of it. This confusion of ideas is only owing to a want of right and regular instructions. You will often find their heart better than their head: and if you do, they not only deserve your candour, but claim your esteem.

Whilst you endeavour to avoid what is trite, low and vulgar, beware you do not run into (what is equally ridiculous) a false delicacy. Apply this caution to every thing; your style, sentiments, taste, temper and conduct.

In administering the sacramental seals attend to the original institution and design of them, and conduct yourself thereby.

In visiting the sick (a duty which you will find, perhaps, to be as difficult as any in the pastoral

pastoral office) consider the character, condition and understanding of the person you visit; and direct your address to him according to the danger of his case, and the temper you find him in. Preserve a seriousness of mind, a freedom of speech, and a composure of spirit throughout the whole. To animate your prayers and compassion for him, suppose yourself in his case, and be thankful that you are not.

Observe where your chief ministerial talent lies; whether in prayer or preaching: if in prayer, whether it consists in a copiousness of expression, enlargement of thought, or devotion of spirit: if in preaching, whether it lies in judicious composition, propriety of style, or pathetic address: and improve it by frequent exercise. And whatever be your principal defect, take care to mend it by a frequent converse with such as excel in those points wherein you are most defective.

Beware of an innovating spirit, or a love of novelty in religious principles. It is a dangerous affectation; and hath drawn multitudes into scepticism on the one hand, and the wildest enthusiasm on the other.

Be very serious and sincere in all your ministrations. To that end, keep not only the end of your ministry but the end of life in view. Be very

very diligent to fulfil the service of each, 'ere providence put a period to both. Mr. Baxter used to say.

> I preach as if I ne'er should preach again ;
> And as a dying man, to dying men.

Finally, pray for your flock. Pray for yourself. Be very frequent and fervent in your applications to the throne of grace for a blessing on your ministerial labours; that God would be pleased to direct you from time to time, to the most suitable and important subjects; and assist your meditations on them; give a divine blessing to his own word, and make you the happy instrument of "bringing many sons unto glory."

And thus, sir, in compliance with your desire, I have given you my thoughts very freely and faithfully on the subject you proposed.——I conclude all with repeating my request, that so far as you see the fore-mentioned rules to be just, right and reasonable, you would not only approve but practise them; and form your ministerial character and conduct thereby. And then, by the blessing of God, they will secure to you the best success in that important service, to which you are now to devote your life and labours. With strength from Heaven equal to your work on earth, may

you come forth to your flock "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace;" and finally meet with a large reward from "the great shepherd and bishop of souls, when you shall appear before him at his coming!" this is the earnest prayer of,

Sir, your very affectionate Brother,

And humble Servant,

J. M.

AN

ESSAY

ON

ELOCUTION, or PRONUNCIATION.

ELOCUTION is a branch of oratory, the power and importance of which is greater than is generally thought; insomuch that eloquence takes its name from it *.

It was much cultivated by Quintilian, and before him by Cicero, and before him by M. Antonius; but before his time, it was too much

* Eloquentia ab eloqui. I use the word elocution here in its common and vulgar sense, to signify utterance, delivery, or pronunciation, in which sense we frequently use it in the English language, and which its Latin etymology very well justifies; though I know some good writers apply it to a different idea, in conformity to the sense in which the Latin orators used the word *elocutio*. But it is no uncommon thing for derivative words in one language to be taken in a different sense from that in which the words they are derived from are taken in another.

neglected by the Roman orators: which made him say, he had seen many men famous for eloquence, but not one of them that understood elocution *.

But what stress was laid upon it by the Greek orators, appears from that celebrated saying of Demosthenes; who being asked, what was the first principal thing in oratory? answered, Pronunciation; being asked again what was the second? replied, Pronunciation. And what was the third? Pronunciation. Denoting that in his judgment the whole art, spirit and power of oratory consisted in this †.

Cicero, and after him Quintilian, divided oratory into five parts. 1. Invention: By which we provide ourselves with suitable and sufficient materials for a discourse. 2. Disposition: By which they meant the division of their subject into parts and sentences, according to the most natural

* A se disertos visos multos, eloquentem autem neminem. Quintil. lib. viii. proœm.

† Quintil. lib. xi. cap. 3. Tully in relating this story concerning Demosthenes, says that the repeated answer was Actio. (De Oratore l. 3.) Which shews that the Latins by pronunciatio and actio meant the same thing; and that by each they understood the right and just management of the voice, looks and gesture, in speaking. Hence they whose business it is to speak publicly on the stage, are with us called actors.

order;

order; and consequently the proper distribution and arrangement of their ideas. 3. Elocution: By which they always meant, what we call, diction; which consists in suiting our words to our ideas, and the style to the subject. 4. Memory, or a faculty of clearly discerning and retaining our ideas, and of calling to mind the properest words by which to express them. 5. Pronunciation; or the art of managing the voice, and gesture in speaking *.

So that by pronunciation, the ancients understood both elocution and action; and comprehended in it the right management of the voice, looks and gesture. To the former of these the present essay is chiefly confined; viz. The right management of the voice in reading or speaking; which is indifferently called by us, elocution and pronunciation.

The great design and end of a good pronunciation is to make the ideas seem to come from the heart; and then they will not fail to excite the attention and affections of them that hear us †: from which the great benefit and usefulness of this too much neglected art may be seen.

* Cic. Rhetoric. lib. i.

† Hoc scire tamen oportet pronunciationem bonam id efficere, ut res ex animo agi videatur.

Incerti Author. ad C. Herenium, lib. 4.

The design of this essay is to shew

I. What a bad pronunciation is, and how to avoid it.

II. What a good pronunciation is, and how to attain it.

SECTION I.

What a bad Pronunciation is, and how to Avoid it.

I. What a bad pronunciation is.

Now the several faults of pronunciation are these following:

1. When the voice is too loud.

This is very disagreeable to the hearer, and very inconvenient to the speaker.

It will be very disagreeable to the hearers, if they be persons of good taste: who will always look upon it to be the effect either of ignorance or affectation.

Some will impute it to your ignorance, and suppose that you was never instructed better since you left the reading-school; where children generally get a habit of reading in a high-pitched key, or a uniform elevated voice, without any regard to emphasis, cadence, or a graceful elocution.

Others

Others will impute it to affectation; or a design to work upon their passions; which will immediately defeat the design, if you had it. For if you would effectually move the passions, you must carefully conceal your intention so to do: for as soon as the mind perceives you have such a design upon it, it will be upon its guard. However, none but the most low, weak, and mechanical minds will be affected with mere dint of sound and noise. The passions so raised, leave no lasting or valuable effects upon the mind, and answer no good purpose or end; because the understanding hath nothing to do with such impressions, and the memory no handle by which to retain or recal them. Not to say, it often answers a bad end; affects the mind in a wrong place, and gives it a false bias. However this may be thought to become the stage or the bar, it least of all befits the pulpit; where all ought to be solemn, serious, rational, and grave as the subjects there treated of.

It is false oratory then to seek to persuade or affect by mere vehemence of voice. A thing that hath been often attempted by men of mean furniture, low genius, or bad taste, among the ancients as well as the moderns. A practice which formerly gave the judicious Quintilian great offence;

fence: who calls it not only clamouring, but furious bellowing; not vehemence, but downright violence *.

Besides, an over-strained voice is very inconvenient to the speaker, as well as disgustful to judicious hearers. It exhausts his spirits to no purpose. It takes from him the proper management and modulation of his voice according to the sense of his subject. And, what is worst of all, it naturally leads him into a tone.

Every man's voice indeed should fill the place where he speaks; but if it exceed its natural key, it will be neither sweet nor soft, nor agreeable, because he will not be able to give every word its proper and distinguishing sound †.

2. Another fault in pronunciation is when the voice is too low.

This is not so inconvenient to the speaker, but is as disagreeable to the hearer, as the other extreme. And indeed to the generality of hearers a too low voice is much more displeasing than a

* Nam et clamant ubique, et omnino emugiunt, multo discursu, anhelitu, jactatione, gestu, motu capitis, furentes. Illi hanc vim appellant, quæ est potius violentia.

Quint. lib. xi. cap. 12.

† Vox autem ultra vires urgenda non est; nam et suffocata sæpe, et majore nisu minùs clara est. Quint. lib. xi. c. 3.

too

too loud one; especially to those who are troubled with an impediment in hearing, and those who are best pleased with a lively and pathetic address, as most are. It is always offensive to an audience to observe any thing in the reader or speaker that looks like indolence or inattention. The hearer will never be affected whilst he sees the speaker indifferent.

The art of governing the voice consists a good deal in dexterously avoiding these two extremes: At least, this ought to be first minded. For a general rule to direct you herein, I know of none better than this, viz. carefully to preserve the key, (that is the command) of your voice; and at the same time, to adapt the elevation and strength of it to the condition and number of the persons you speak to, and the nature of the place you speak in. It would be altogether as ridiculous in a general who is haranguing an army to speak in a low and languid voice, as in a person who reads a chapter in a family to speak in a loud and eager one.

3. Another fault in pronunciation is a thick, hasty, cluttering voice.

When a person mumbles, or (as we say) clips or swallows his words, that is, leaves out some syllables in the long words, and never pronounces some of the short ones at all; but hurries on without

without any care to be heard distinctly, or to give his words their full sound, or his hearers the full sense of them.

This is often owing to a defect in the organs of speech, or a too great flutter of the animal spirits; but oftener to a bad habit uncorrected.

Demosthenes, the greatest orator Greece ever produced, had it is said, nevertheless, three natural impediments in pronunciation; all which he conquered by invincible labour and perseverance. One was a weakness of voice; which he cured by frequently declaiming on the sea-shore, amidst the noise of the waves. Another was a shortness of breath; which he mended by repeating his orations as he walked up a hill. And the other was the fault I am speaking of; a thick mumbling way of speaking; which he broke himself of by declaiming with pebbles in his mouth *.

4. Another fault in pronunciation is when persons speak too quick †.

Than which there is scarcely any fault more common; especially among young persons, who imagine they can read very well, and are not afraid

* Lives of the Classic Auth. vol. ii. p. 36, 37.

† Nec volubilitate nimiâ confundenda quæ dicimus; quo et distinctio perit et affectus; et nonnunquam etiam verba aliquâ sui parte fraudantur. Quint. lib. xi. cap. 3.

of

of being stopped in their career by the unexpected intervention of any hard word. And scarcely any bad habit of the voice is conquered with more difficulty; though one would imagine nothing is more easy.

This manner of reading may do well enough when we are examining leases, perusing indentures, or reciting acts of parliament, where there is always a great superfluity of words; or in reading a news-paper, where there is but little matter that deserves our attention; but is very improper in reading books of devotion and instruction, and especially the sacred Scriptures, where the solemnity of the subject or the weight of the sense demands a particular regard. But it is most of all inexcusable to read forms of prayer in this manner as acts of devotion.

The great disadvantage which attends this manner of pronunciation is, that the hearer loses the benefit of more than half the good things he hears, and would fain remember, but cannot. A speaker should always have a regard to the memory as well as the understanding of his hearers *.

5. It is also a fault to speak too slow.

* Cum enim fertur, quasi torrens, oratio, quamvis multa cujusque modi rapiat, nihil tamen teneas, nihil apprehendas. Cic. de Fin. lib. ii. cap. 1.

Some are apt to read in a heavy, droning, sleepy way; and through mere carelessness make pauses at improper places. This is very disagreeable. But to hem, hawk, sneeze, yawn, or cough, between the periods, is more so.

A too slow elocution is most faulty in reading trifles that do not require attention. It then becomes tedious. A person that is addicted to this slow way of speaking should always take care to reward his hearer's patience with important sentiments, and compensate the want of words by a weight of thought; and give his discourse its proper quantity of solid sense, that (as we say) what it wants in length it may make out in breadth.

But a too slow elocution is a fault very rarely to be found, unless in aged people, and those who naturally speak so in common conversation. In these, if the pronunciation be in all other respects just, decent, and proper; and especially if the subject be weighty or intricate, it is very excuseable.

6. An irregular or uneven voice, is a great fault in reading.

That is when the voice rises and falls by fits and starts, or when it is elevated or depressed unnaturally or unseasonably, without regard to sense or stops;

stops; or always beginning a sentence with a high voice, and concluding it with a low one, or *vice versa;* or always beginning and concluding it with the same key. Opposite to this is

7. A flat, dull, uniform tone of voice, without emphasis or cadence, or any regard to the sense or subject of what is read.

This is a habit, which children, who have been used to read their lessons by way of task, are very apt to fall into, and retain as they grow up. Such a monotony as attorneys' clerks read in when they examine an engrossed deed. This is a great infelicity when it becomes habitual; because it deprives the hearer of the greatest part of the benefit or advantage he might receive by a close attention to the most weighty and interesting parts of the subject, which should always be distinguished or pointed out by the pronunciation. For a just pronunciation is a good commentary: And therefore no person ought to read a chapter or a psalm in public, before he hath carefully read it over to himself once or twice in private. But

Lastly, the greatest and most common fault of all, is reading with a tone.

No habit is more easy to be contracted than this, or more hard to be conquered. This unnatural tone in reading and speaking is very various;

ous; but whatever it be, it is always disgustful to persons of delicacy and judgment *.

Some have a womanish, squeaking tone; which, persons whose voices are shrill and weak, and over-strained, are very apt to fall into.

Some have a singing or canting tone, which the speakers among the quakers generally much affect, and by which their hearers are often much affected.

Others affect a high, swelling, theatrical tone, who being ambitious of the fame of fine orators, lay too much emphasis on every sentence, and thereby transgress the rules of true oratory.

Others affect an awful and striking tone, attended with solemn grimace, as if they would move you with every word, whether the weight of the subject bear them out or not. This is what persons of a gloomy or melancholy cast of mind are most apt to give into.

Some have a set, uniform tone of voice; which I have already taken notice of. And others, an odd, whimsical, whining tone, peculiar to themselves, and not to be described; only that it is

* Sed quodcunque ex his vitium magis tulerim quàm quo nunc maxime laboratur in causis omnibus scholisque, cantandi: quod inutilius sit an fædius nescio. Quint. lib. xi. cap. 3.

laying

laying the emphasis on words which do not require or deserve it.

It must be owned, there are some kinds of tone, which, though unnatural, yet, as managed by the speakers, are not very disagreeable; and the mind must be much on its guard that can remain unmoved thereby.

When I have been affected with hearing some preachers deliver common or obscure sentiments in such a striking tone, I have endeavoured carefully to examine into the true reason of that emotion, or what it was that excited that affection in my mind; and have found that it could not arise from the mere tone of the speaker, (which of itself was unnatural and disagreeable) nor from the weight of the subject, (which was no more than common) but from the earnestness, life and solemnity with which he spake, and his appearing himself to be much affected with what he delivered; which two things will never fail to move an audience. And why they may not be as well observed and practised without a tone as with one, I cannot conceive. And without these I verily believe a tone itself would have no power to move; and that it hath no other subserviency to raise the passions than as it solemnizes the subject, and seems to shew the speaker's heart engaged. Pity that those two ends should not be answered by a better

better means; and that a bad habit in the speaker, indulging a false taste in the hearers, should secure one great end of oratory by that which is the greatest abuse of it.

These are the most common faults of a bad pronunciation. Our next enquiry is

II. How to avoid them.

To this end the few following rules may be of service.

1. If you would not read in too loud or too low a voice, consider whether your voice be naturally too low or loud; and correct it accordingly in your ordinary conversation: by which means you will be better able to correct it in reading. If it be too low, converse with those that are deaf; if too loud, with those whose voices are low. Begin your periods with an even moderate voice, that you may have the command of it, to raise or fall it as the subject requires.

2. To cure a thick, confused, cluttering voice, accustom yourself, both in conversation and reading, to pronounce every word distinct and clear. Observe with what deliberation some converse and read, and how full a sound they give to every word; and imitate them. Do not affect to contract your words, (as some do) or run two into one. This may do very well in conversation, or in reading familiar dialogues, but is not so decent

in

in grave and solemn subjects; especially in reading the sacred Scriptures.

It appears from Demosthenes' case, that this fault of pronunciation cannot be cured without much difficulty, nor will you find his remedy effectual without pains and perseverance.

3. To break a habit of reading too fast, attend diligently to the sense, weight, and propriety of every sentence you read, and of every emphatical word in it. This will not only be an advantage to yourself, but a double one to your hearers; for it will at once give them time to do the same, and excite their attention when they see yours is fixed. A solemn pause after a weighty thought is very beautiful and striking.—A well timed stop gives as much grace to speech as it does to music. Imagine that you are reading to persons of slow and unready conceptions; and measure not your hearer's apprehension by your own. If you do, you may possibly out-run it. As in reading you are not at liberty to repeat your words and sentences, *that* should engage you to be very deliberate in pronouncing them, that their sense may not be lost. The ease and advantage that will arise both to the reader and hearer, by a free, full and deliberate pronunciation is hardly to be imagined.

I need

I need lay down no rules to avoid a too slow pronunciation; that being a fault which few are guilty of.

4. To cure an uneven, desultory voice, take care that you do not begin your periods either in too high or too low a key; for that will necessarily lead you to an unnatural and improper variation of it. Have a careful regard to the nature and quantity of your points, and the length of your periods; and keep your mind intent on the sense, subject, and spirit of your author.

The same directions are necessary to avoid a monotony in pronunciation, or a dull, set, uniform tone of voice. For if your mind be but attentive to the sense of your subject, you will naturally manage and modulate your voice according to the nature and importance of it.

Lastly. To avoid all kinds of unnatural and disagreeable tones, the only rule is to endeavour to speak with the some ease and freedom as you would do on the same subject in private conversation. You hear nobody converse in a tone; unless they have the brogue of some other country, or have got into a habit (as some have) of altering the natural key of their voice when they are talking of some serious subject in religion. But I can see no reason in the world, that when

in common conversation we speak in a natural voice with proper accent and emphasis, yet as soon as we begin to read, or talk of religion, or speak in public, we should immediately assume a stiff, awkward, unnatural tone. If we are indeed deeply affected with the subject we read or talk of, the voice will naturally vary according to the passion excited; but if we vary it unnaturally, only to seem affected, or with a design to affect others, it then becomes a tone and is offensive.

In reading then attend to your subject, and deliver it just in such a manner as you would do if you were talking of it. This is the great, general and most important rule of all; which, if carefully observed, will correct not only this but almost all the other faults of a bad pronunciation; and give you an easy, decent, graceful delivery, agreeable to all the rules of a right elocution. For however apt we are to transgress them in reading, we follow them naturally and easily enough in conversation. Children will tell a story with all the natural graces and beauties of pronunciation, however awkwardly they may read the same out of a book *.

And

* Let the tone and sound of your voice in reading be the same as it is in speaking; and do not affect to change that natural

And therefore to attain a just and proper pronunciation in reading, it will be adviseable to begin with those books that are writ in a familiar style, that comes nearest to that of common conversation; such as the Pilgrim's Progress, the Family Instructor, or some innocent novel.

SECTION II.

What a good Pronunciation is, and how to Attain it.

1. What a good pronunciation is.

A good pronunciation in reading, is the art of managing and governing the voice so as to express the full sense and spirit of your author in that just, decent, and graceful manner, which will not only instruct but affect the hearers; and will not only raise in them the same ideas he intended to convey, but the same passions he really felt. This is the great end of reading to others, and this end can only be attained by a proper and just pronunciation.

natural and easy sound wherewith you speak, for a strange, new, awkward tone, as some do when they begin to read; which would almost persuade our ears, that the speaker and the reader were two different persons, if our eyes did not tell us the contrary. WATTS's Art of Reading.

Hence

Hence we may learn wherein a good pronunciation in speaking consists; which is nothing but a natural, easy and graceful variation of the voice, suitable to the nature and importance of the sentiments we deliver.

A good pronunciation in both these respects is more easily attained by some than others; as some can more readily enter into the sense and sentiments of an author, and more easily deliver their own, than others can; and at the same time have a more happy facility of expressing all the proper variations and modulations of the voice than others have. Thus persons of a quick apprehension, and a brisk flow of animal spirits (setting aside all impediments of the organs) have generally a more lively, just, and natural elocution than persons of a slow perception and a phlegmatic cast. However, it may in a good degree be attained by every one that will carefully attend to and practise those rules that are proper to acquire it. Which leads me therefore

II. To enquire how a good pronunciation is to be attained.

And to this end the observation of the following rules is necessary.

1. Have a particular regard to your pauses, emphasis, and cadence.

1. To your pauses.

And

And with respect to this, you will in a good measure in reading be directed by the points: but not perfectly; for there are but few books that are exactly pointed.

The common stops or points are these; a comma (,), semi-colon (;), colon (:), period (.), interrogation (?), and admiration (!).

But besides these, there are four more notes or distinctions of pause, viz. a parenthesis (()): which requires the pause of a comma at least, and some-times a semi-colon after it. 2. A double-period, or blank line (————); which denote the pause of two periods, or half a paragraph. 3. A paragraph or break; when the line is broke or left imperfect, and the next begins under the second or third letter of the preceding line; and denotes the pause of two double periods. 4. A double paragraph, that is, when the next line not only begins shorter than the preceding, but leaves the space of a whole line vacant between them; which shews that the voice is to rest during the time of two paragtaphs.

These points serve two purposes. 1. To distinguish the sense of the author. 2. To direct the pronunciation of the reader.

You are not to fetch your breath (if it can be avoided) till you come to the period or full stop; but

but a discernible pause is to be made at every one, according to its proper quantity or duration.

A comma stops the voice while we may privately tell one, a semi-colon two; a colon three: and a period four.

Where the periods are very long, you may take breath at a colon or semi-colon; and sometimes at a comma, but never where there is no stop at all. And that you may not be under the necessity to take fresh breath before you come to a proper pause, it will be proper to look forward to the close of the sentence, and measure the length of it with your eye before you begin it; that if it be long, you may take in a sufficient supply of breath to carry you to the end of it.

To break a habit of taking breath too often in reading, accustom yourself to read long periods, such, for instance, as the sixteen first lines in Milton's Paradise Lost.

After some weighty and important sentiment, it will be proper to make a longer pause than ordinary; and especially towards the close or application of a discourse or sermon (where the subject usually grows more serious and affecting) these long pauses are very proper; as they at once compose and affect the mind, and give it time to think. It will also be very helpful to the speaker's voice; and give his pronunciation the advantage of variety,

variety, which is always pleasing to the hearers *. And therefore in printing the most affecting parts of a discourse, there should be (as we sometimes see there is) a frequent use of the long pauses, viz. the periods, blank lines, and paragraphs.

But after all, there is so much license admitted, and so much irregularity introduced, into the modern method of punctuation, that it is become a very imperfect rule to direct a just pronunciation. The pauses therefore, as well as the variations of the voice, must be chiefly regulated by a careful attention to the sense and importance of the subject.

2. The next thing to be regarded in reading is the emphasis; and to see that it be always laid on the emphatical word.

When we distinguish any particular syllable in a word with a strong voice, it is called accent; when we thus distinguish any particular word in a sentence, it is called emphasis; and the word so distinguished the emphatical word. And the emphatical words (for there are often more than one) in a sentence are those which carry a weight or

* Intervalla vocem confirmant: eâdem sententias concinniores divisione reddunt, et auditori spatium cogitandi relinquunt. Conservat vocem continui clamoris remissio, et auditorem quidem varietas maximè delectat.

Incert. Auth. ad C. Heren. lib. iii.

importance

importance in themselves, or those on which the sense of the rest depends; and these must always be distinguished by a fuller and stronger sound of voice, wherever they are found, whether in the beginning, middle, or end of a sentence. Take for instance those words of the satyrist.

——————Rém, facias rém,
Récte, si possis, si non, quocúnque modo rém.
HOR.

Get pláce and wealth, if possible, with gráce,
If not, by ány means get wéalth and pláce.
POPE.

In these lines the emphatical words are accented; and which they are the sense will always discover.

Here it may not be amiss briefly to observe two or three things.

1. That some sentences are so full and comprehensive, that almost every word is emphatical: for instance, that pathetic expostulation in the prophecy of Ezekiel.

Why will ye die?

In this short sentence every word is emphatical, and on which ever word you lay the emphasis, whether the first, second, third, or fourth, it

it strikes out a different sense, and opens a new subject of moving expostulation *.

2. Some sentences are equivocal, as well as some words; that is, contain in them more senses than one; and which is the sense intended, can only be known by observing on what word the emphasis is laid. For instance,—shall you ride to town to day? This question is capable of being taken in four different senses, according to the different words on which you lay the emphasis. If it be laid on the word [you], the answer may be, No, but I intend to send my servant in my stead. If the emphasis be laid on the word [ride], the proper answer might be, No, I intend to walk it. If you place the emphasis on the word [town], it is a different question: and the answer may be, No, for I design to ride into the country. And if the emphasis be laid upon the word [to-day], the sense is still something different from all these; and the proper answer may be, No, but I shall to-morrow. Of such importance oftentimes is a right emphasis, in order to determine the proper sense of what we read or speak. But I would observe

* See this particularly illustrated in Reynolds's compassionate Address.

3. The

3. The voice must express, as near as may be, the very sense or idea designed to be conveyed by the emphatical word; by a strong, rough and violent, or a soft, smooth and tender sound.

Thus the different passions of the mind are to be expressed by a different sound or tone of voice. Love, by a soft, smooth, languishing voice; anger, by a strong, vehement and elevated voice; joy, by a quick, sweet, and clear voice; sorrow, by a low, flexible, interrupted voice; fear, by a dejected, tremulous, hesitating voice; courage, hath a full, bold, and loud voice; and perplexity, a grave, steady, and earnest one. Briefly, in exordiums the voice should be low; in narrations, distinct; in reasoning, slow; in persuasions, strong: it should thunder in anger, soften in sorrow, tremble in fear, and melt in love *.

4. The variation of the emphasis must not only distinguish the various passions described, but the several forms and figures of speech in which they are expressed, *e. g.*

In a prosopopæia, we must change the voice as the person introduced would.

In an antithesis, one contrary must be pronounced louder than the other.

* Apta pronunciatio certè ea est quæ iis de quibus dicimus accommodatur. Quint. lib. i. cap. 3.

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pure and elegant, his cadence of style will naturally direct your cadence of voice.

Cadence generally takes place at the end of a sentence; unless it closes with an emphatical word.

Every parenthesis is to be pronounced in cadence; that is, with a low voice, and quicker than ordinary; that it may not take off the attention too much from the sense of the period it interrupts. But all apostrophes and prosopopæias are to be pronounced in emphasis.

So much for pauses, emphasis, and cadence: a careful regard to all which is the first rule for attaining a right pronunciation.

II. If you would acquire a just pronunciation in reading you must not only take in the full sense, but enter into the spirit of your author: for you can never convey the force and fulness of his ideas to another till you feel them yourself. No man can read an author he does not perfectly understand and taste.

"The great rule which the masters of rhetoric so much press, can never enough be remembered; that to make a man speak well and pronounce with a right emphasis, he ought thoroughly to understand all that he says, be fully persuaded of it, and bring himself to have those affections which he desires to infuse into others. He that

is inwardly persuaded of the truth of what he says, and that hath a concern about it in his mind, will pronounce with a natural vehemence that is far more lovely than all the strains that art can lead him to. An orator must endeavour to feel what he says, and then he will speak so as to make others feel it *."

This is a very general and important rule, and (as the bishop says) can never enough be remembered; and hence it is that so few are able to read Milton or Young.

The same rules are to be observed in reading poetry and prose: neither the rhime nor the numbers should take off your attention from the sense and spirit of your author. It is this only that must direct your pronunciation in poetry as well as prose. When you read verse, you must not at all favour the measure or rhime; that often obscures the sense and spoils the pronunciation: for the great end of pronunciation is to elucidate and heighten the sense; that is to represent it not only in a clear but a strong light. Whatever then obstructs this is carefully to be avoided, both in verse and prose. Nay, this ought to be more carefully observed in reading verse than prose; because the author, by a constant attention to his

* Burnet's Pastoral Care, p. 228.

measures

measures and rhime, and the exaltation of his language, is often very apt to obscure his sense; which therefore requires the more care in the reader to discover and distinguish it by the pronunciation. If when you read verse with proper pause, emphasis and cadence, and a pronunciation varied and governed by the sense, it be not harmonious and beautiful, the fault is not in the reader but the author. If the verse be good, to read it thus will improve its harmony; because it will take off that uniformity of sound and accent which tires the ear, and makes the numbers heavy and disagreeable.

III. Another important rule to be observed in elocution is, study nature. By this I mean,

1. Your own natural dispositions and affections. Those subjects that are most suitable to them, you will easily pronounce with a beautiful propriety: and to heigthen the pronunciation, the natural warmth of the mind should be permitted to have its course under a proper rein and regulation.

2. Study the natural dispositions and affections of others. For some are much more easily impressed and moved one way, and some another. An orator should be acquainted with all the avenues to the heart.

3. Study

3. Study the most easy and natural way of expressing yourself, both as to the tone of voice and the mode of speech. This is best learnt by observations on common conversation; where all is free, natural and easy; where we are only intent on making ourselves understood, and conveying our ideas in a strong, plain, and lively manner, by the most natural language, pronunciation and action. The nearer our pronunciation in public comes to the freedom and ease of that we use in common discourse (provided we keep up the dignity of the subject, and preserve a propriety of expression) the more just and natural and agreeable it will generally be.

Above all things then study nature; avoid affectation; never use art, if you have not the art to conceal it: for whatever does not appear natural, can never be agreeable, much less persuasive *.

IV. Endeavour to keep your mind collected and composed.

Guard against that flutter and timidity of spirit, which is the common infelicity of young, and especially bashful persons, when they first begin to speak or read in public. This is a great hinderance

* Naturam intueamur, hanc sequamur. Similis est arti plerumque Natura. Quint. lib. viii. cap. 3.

both

both to their pronunciation and invention; and at once gives both themselves and their hearers an unnecessary pain. It will by constant opposition wear off. And the best way to give the mind a proper degree of assurance and self-command at such a time, is

1. To be entire master of your subject; and a consciousness that you deliver to your audience nothing but what is well worth their hearing, will give you a good degree of courage.

2. Endeavour to be wholly engaged in your subject; and when the mind is intent upon and warmed with it, it will forget that awful deference it before paid to the audience, which was so apt to disconcert it.

3. If the sight of your hearers, or any of them discompose you, keep your eyes from them.

V. Be sure to keep up a life, spirit and energy in the expression; and let the voice naturally vary according to the variation of the style and subject.

Whatever be the subject, it will never be pleasing, if the style be low and flat; nor will the beauty of the style be discovered, if the pronunciation be so.

Cicero observes there must be a glow in our style if we would warm our hearers *. And who

* Nec unquam is qui audiret incenderetur, nisi ardens ad eum perveniret oratio. Cic. de Orat.

does

does not observe how ridiculous it is to pronounce the *ardens verbum* in a cold lifeless tone? and the transition of the voice (as before observed) must always correspond with that of the subject, and the passions it was intended to excite.

VI. In order to attain a just and graceful pronunciation, you should accustom yourselves frequently to hear those who excel in it, whether at the bar or in the pulpit; where you will see all the fore-mentioned rules exemplified, and be able to account for all those graces and beauties of pronunciation which always pleased you, but you did not know why.

Indeed, the art of pronunciation, like all others, is better learnt by imitation than rule: but to be first acquainted with the rules of it, will make the imitation more easy. And beyond all that hath been said, or can be described, you will observe a certain agreeableness of manner in some preachers that is natural to them, not to be reduced to any rule, and to be learnt by imitation only; nor by that, unless it be in some degree natural to you.

Lastly. You should frequently exercise yourself to read aloud according to the foregoing rules.

It is practice only that must give you the faculty of an elegant pronunciation. This, like other habits, is only to be attained by often repeated acts.

Orators

Orators indeed, as well as poets, must be born so, or they will never excel in their respective arts: but that part of oratory which consists in a decent and graceful pronunciation (provided there be no defect in the organs of speech) may be attained by rule, imitation and practice; and when attained, will give a beauty to your speech, a force to your thoughts, and a pleasure to the hearers, not to be expressed; and which all will admire, but none can imitate, unless they are first prepared for it by art and nature *.

In fine, the great advantage of a just pronunciation is, that it will please all, whether they have no taste, a bad taste, or a good taste.

Here I intended to have put an end to this essay: but as under the word pronunciation the ancients comprehended action as well as elocution; and a few general rules concerning that may be of use to such as speak in public, I thought it might not be improper here briefly to subjoin them.

The action then should be as easy and as natural as the elocution; and like that must be varied and directed by the passions.

* ——————————Ut sibi quivis
Speret idem, sudet multum, frustrâque laboret
Ausus idem. Hor. de Art. Poet. l. 241.

An affected violence of motion is as disgustful as an affected vehemence of voice; and no action, as bad as no emphasis: which two faults commonly go together, as do the other two, just before mentioned.

Those parts of the body that are to be principally employed in oratorical action are the head, the face, the eyes, the hands, and the upper part of the whole body.

1. The head. This should generally be in an erect posture; turning sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other, that the voice may be heard by the whole audience, and a regard paid to the several parts of it.

It should always be on the same side with the action of the hands and body, except when we express an abhorrence, or a refusal of any thing, which is done by rejecting it with the right hand, and turning away the head to the left; as in that sentence—*Dii talem terris avertete pestem*—where such an action is very proper in pronouncing the word *avertete*.

2. The countenance. In this is the seat of the soul and the very life of action. Every passion, whilst uttered with the tongue, should be painted in the face. There is often more eloquence in a look than any words can express. By this we are awed, charmed, incensed, softened,

tened, grieved, rejoiced, raised, or dejected, according as we catch the fire of the speaker's passion from his face. In short, there is no end in recounting the force and effects of this dumb oratory; which nature only teaches, and which persons of low passions lose all the advantages of. Look well upon a good piece of painting where the passions are strongly expressed, and you will conceive the power of it *.

3. The eyes. These should be carried from one part of the audience to another; with a modest and decent respect; which will tend to recal and fix their attention, and animate your own spirit by observing their attention fixed. But if their affections be strongly moved, and the observing it be a means of raising your own too high, it will be necessary then to keep the eye from off them. For though an orator should always be animated, he should never be overcome by his passions.

In all appeals to heaven, and sometimes at the solemn mention of the name of the great God, the eyes and the head should be turned upwards.

In adoration, the hands and eyes should be lifted up, and the head and body bowing down.

* Hic (vultus) est sæpe pro omnibus verbis.
Quint. lib. xi. cap. 3.

In

In solemn vows, exclamations and appeals to heaven, the hands, head and eyes should all be lifted up; but in humiliation and confession bowed down.

The language of the eye is inexpressible. It is the window of the soul; from which sometimes the whole heart looks out at once, and speaks more feelingly than all the warmest strains of oratory; and comes effectually in aid of it, when the passion is too strong to be uttered.

4. The hands. The left hand should never be used alone *; unless it be to attend the motion of the head and eyes in an address to the audience on the left side.

The right hand may be often used alone.

When you speak of the body, you may point to it with the middle finger of your right hand.

When you speak of your soul or conscience you may lay your right hand gently on your breast.

It should be often displayed with an easy motion to favour an emphasis; but seldom or never be quite extended.

All its motions should be from the left to the right.

* Manus sinistra nunquam sola gestum recte facit: Dextræ se frequenter accommodat. Quint. lib. xi. cap 3.

Both

Both the hands displayed, and the arms extended is a violent action, and never just or decent unless the audience be noisy, and part of them at a distance from the speaker, and he is labouring to be heard; and then they should never be extended higher than the head, unless pointing at something above the audience*.

The motion of the hand should always correspond with those of the head and eyes; as they should with the passions expressed.

In deliberate proof or argumentation, no action is more proper or natural than gently to lay the first finger of the right hand on the palm of the left.

Of what great use the proper motion of the hand is in assisting pronunciation, and how many passions may be strongly indicated thereby, when attended with that of the head and eyes, is not easy to be described, but is soon observed in common conversation.

Lastly, the posture of the body. This should be usually erect; not continually changing, nor always motionless; declining in acts of humiliation; in acts of praise and thanksgiving, raised.

* See Raphael's Cartoon, representing St. Paul preaching at Athens.

It should always accompany the motion of the hands, head and eyes, when they are directed to any particular part of the audience; but never so far as to let the back be turned to any part of it.

But let it suffice just to hint at these things. They who desire to see them more largely treated of may consult *Quintilian de Institutione Oratoriâ*, lib. xi. cap. 3.

But after all, with regard to action, the great rule is (the same as in pronunciation) to follow nature, and avoid affectation. The action of the body, and the several parts of it, must correspond with the pronunciation, as that does with the style, and the style with the subject. A perfect harmony of all which completes the orator *.

* Those who desire to be more particularly acquainted with this subject, and the several other branches of oratory, I would advise not to trust altogether to the rules of modern writers, but to repair to the fountain head; and converse with the great masters and teachers of this art among the ancients; particularly Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Cicero, Quintilian, and Longinus.

A

SUPPLEMENT

ON

CATECHISING.

CATECHISING is a mode of conveying knowledge peculiarly adapted to the capacities of the young and ignorant. It assumes the form of familiar conversation, and the catechumen by being made the respondent, becomes in a manner his own instructor. Knowledge by this mode, is gradually conveyed into the mind; and the attention is not liable to be fatigued and burdened, as by a long, continued discourse; which requires previous knowledge to be understood, and some fixed application and comprehension of mind to be received with advantage. "Catechising gives opportunity of observing how far a subject is understood, and of illustrating it, till it be clearly apprehended. It tends to make things better retained. It serves to explain those terms which often occur in preaching, and which however familiar they may be to the preacher, might be dark to

to many of the hearers, or be misunderstood by them: and will thus prove an excellent preparation for their attending to sermons with understanding and advantage. A particular species of it was the only method which Socrates used for either confuting errors, or leading men to the knowledge of the truth. It has been always practised in the christian church, and converts to christianity were by this method very carefully instructed in the nature of that religion, before they were baptized; and on this account were during the time that passed before their baptism, called catechumens *."

The instruction of the rising generation, naturally devolves in the first instance, on parents, who have a greater interest in the cultivation of their minds and the formation of their manners, and who enjoy daily opportunities of instilling into them just sentiments. But the christian minister, by the nature and design of his office, extending its beneficial influence and its pastoral care to all characters and all ages, is under a sacred and benevolent obligation to include in his duties, the instruction of children and youth. The negligence of parents, whether it proceed from ignorance, or vice, or the multi-

* Gerrard's Pastoral Care. p. 417, 418.

plicity

plicity of their concerns, makes this office of love to the young necessary to compensate their deficiency. The enlightened and virtuous parent will warmly thank him for seconding his own paternal care. The young minister will himself derive much benefit from the attention he bestoweth on the young. It will lead him to simplify his religious opinions, fix his thoughts on the most essential, solid and useful principles, improve his own acquaintance with the scriptures, the fountain of divine knowledge, and teach him the most familiar and effectual modes of reaching the capacities of others. He will, also, by this means sow seed that will remain. He will attach to him the rising generation; and form a new race of hearers and friends to support and encourage his future ministrations, when his older friends shall be no more.

This service, like other functions of the ministerial character, has its difficulties, and calls for peculiar rules. Assistance may be derived from a variety of catechetical compositions, which the judgment and pious zeal of many ministers have furnished. Those of Dr. Watts, Mr. Bourn, and Dr. Priestley, particularly recommend themselves as models, though they should not be adopted, as in all respects, suited to our judgment, views

and

and taste. Mr. Bourn, under the catechetical form, has given us a view of the principles and grounds of the reformation and of a protestant dissent, as well as of the doctrines, duties and evidences of christianity.

I. In the choice or composition of catechisms, attention should be given to the following rules.

1. Catechisms should be adapted to different ages; beginning with the easiest, most essential and evident principles; gradually advancing to higher and more extensive views; embracing not the duties and principles of religion only, but its grounds and evidences.

2. Historical catechisms formed on the scriptures have, in many respects, the advantage above those which consist of abstract principles. They will, of course, be scriptural, including the doctrines of divine revelation, following the order of time, and series of events: they combine example with precept, illustrate by narratives speculative truths, and preserve a correspondence to the method in which the divine communications have been made; that is, not in a systematic but historic form. Facts of which historical catechisms consist, are more easily understood and remembered, than dry details of truths; and reach the heart, as well as inform the understanding.

3. Catechisms

3. Catechisms should be clear and plain. They are, it may be said the a b c of religious knowledge; and elementary pieces. This plainness and simplicity should run through the matter, method and style. The matter should consist of easy principles, as has been already observed; such as carry their own evidence along with them, or are least liable to be doubted of and controverted, which lie at the foundation of faith and practice; and from which the mind as it proceeds to higher and more complex principles, advances with growing light and conviction. Such a selection of topics of instruction will be necessarily accompanied with a perspicuity of method: which must extend itself through the whole piece, making one question an introduction to the next, through all the series; and, if it be divided into parts or chapters, they should succeed each other in a natural order and the questions under each be appropriate to its title. The style, or language must be plain; excluding all scholastic and scientific terms and words that are obscure and difficult to be understood, but by persons of genius and learning; otherwise they will be repeated merely by rote, without conveying any ideas to the mind, or leaving any impressions on the heart.

4. These compositions should be concise and brief. This is necessary to assist and relieve attention,

tention, and to prevent the memory from being overloaded and burdened. It is a natural property of all elementary pieces, that they should be short. The brevity, which should mark the whole composition, ought, particularly, to characterise the questions and answers that they may lie in a small compass, and be more easily comprehended and more readily committed to memory. A long train of reasoning should be avoided; it will introduce confusion, and occasion a disagreeable stretch of the faculties. It is expedient, at least, at times that a catechism should, though comprehensive of essential and important principles, be so concise as to admit the whole of it to be repeated by a class at once; that the united force of them, in their connexion with and dependence on one another, may be felt, and that they may lie in the mind as forming one whole of interesting truths.

5. Catechisms should have a practical tendency.

"It is a fault in most catechisms, that the principles of religion and the precepts of it are kept too much distinct, and laid down in different parts. By this means the practical tendency of the christian doctrines does not appear; their connexion with holiness is not pointed out; the duties of religion are explained, but they are not enforced by proper motives *." It is a recommendation

* Gerrard's Pastoral Care, p. 241.

of

of catechisms formed on the sacred history, that practical principles, rules of conduct and motives to religion and virtue may be easily and advantageously blended and incorporated with theoretical truths. For the facts in sacred history, are narratives of the manifestations and measures of God and his providence to communicate true religion, to divulge laws of righteousness, to assist and encourage piety and virtue, or to restrain and punish iniquity and impiety in individuals and nations: or they exhibit the actions and characters of men, in a great variety of circumstances, displaying goodness and devotion, or exhibiting irreligion and vice, under various aspects and situations, as models for our guidance and imitation, or as warnings of the conduct which we should avoid and abhor. It is easy to incorporate practical instructions with the details of such facts: they obviously arise from them and are placed by their connexion with them in a point of view peculiarly affecting and impressive.

If the young minister can meet with a catechetical composition suitable to his judgment and taste, the next point, which offers to his consideration, is

II. The manner of using it.

1. It will be proper to range the children of his congregation, when he has obtained a list of their

their names, into classes according to their ages: adapting his choice of a catechism to the different periods of life; for the same piece can scarcely be calculated for the child of six or eight years old and the youth of twelve and fourteen. Dr. Watts, and Dr. Priestley, have judiciously, suited their compositions to the difference of age, and Mr. Bourn, formed his to the advancing state of religious knowledge, to which the children and youth under his instruction, attained.

2. The season, or time for catechising, must be governed by circumstances of personal convenience; but the most suitable is, probably, all circumstances taken into consideration, before or immediately after the public services of the Lord's day, if the spirits be not too much jaded and the mind fatigued by them. The children are then collected together, prepared in point of dress and external appearance, detached from their sports, and probably, in a better temper of mind, to attend to and receive religious instruction, the effect of which the design and duties of the day are calculated to promote.

3. The exercise should be rendered as far as possible, agreeable and pleasing. Every thing that would create disgust in young minds, the least appearance of austerity and sternness must be carefully avoided. Cheerfulness should temper gravity;

gravity; and while you would not encourage either levity or boldness, an easy, familiar and condescending deportment should relieve timidity and invite the child and youth to reply to the questions proposed with modest freedom. The manners of the catechist should be conciliating, mild and gentle; and his words kind and affectionate. The exercise should be gone through as a serious and important one; but it may be made at once alluring and instructive by a mixture of good remarks, by putting cases on which the catechumen may decide, by the introducing of examples and characters from general history and biography, and by pertinent anecdotes; by these means attention will be awakened, entertainment will accompany instruction and the heart will be affected.—"When they answer wrong, or appear negligent, do not upbraid or terrify them, but if the failure has been gross, gently reprove them, at the same time endeavouring to keep up their spirits. Be very careful, that you do not confound the children. Seldom reprove them publicly, if they do not answer right, but remember to talk with them in private. Let them know, it is an honour you have done them, to choose them out of their companions, and exhort them to be careful to preserve it *."

* Dr. Doddridge's Lectures on Preaching, p. 92. 94. 12mo. 1804.

The

The distribution of rewards, according to the years, the attention and the proficiency of the catechumens, will excite emulation among them, encourage attention and application, and facilitate the discharge and the effect of this benevolent service to the rising generation. Small pieces and tracts, which unite the *dulce* and *utile*, which will assist and strengthen the impressions made by the instructions communicated, and which will further open the mind and lead to higher degrees of knowledge, by an easy and natural progress, will be proper rewards. These cannot be bestowed without incurring an expense, which ought not to fall on the minister, but be provided for by a congregational fund. "Visions in Verse," Wellbeloved's "Exercises of Devotion," Cornish's "Life of Firmin," and "History of the Puritans," Doddridge's "Three Sermons on the Evidences of Christianity," Mason's "Treatise on Self-knowledge," Fordyce's "Temple of Virtue," catechisms of a higher class for those who have learnt those adapted to the earlier ages, and many other pieces that it would be tedious to enumerate, are fitted to answer the ends of rewards. Books of science and general knowledge, may be also, usefully and aptly selected for this purpose: but I wish to impress it on the mind of instructors and parents, that a preference should be given to those which

which lead the learner up from human science to the Deity and through which sentiments of piety and a spirit of devotion are diffused. The great design of religious instruction is to produce this spirit.

4. Let catechising be conducted in a manner, that will exercise reflection and reason. Children are not to be taught, as *parrots*, to pronounce articulate sounds merely: but as *men*, if not in an embryo state, yet as in the first stage of intellectual life. Though, in the first instance, words only are learnt and the materials of knowledge are treasured up in the memory, which as the faculties ripen, will in time be properly applied, yet no pains should be spared to enlighten at present, according to their capacities, the minds of children and youth. This may be done by examining them on the meaning of the words that occur, by well contrived questions, sifting the apprehensions they have of the subject, and by breaking an answer into as many questions as it will admit, which should be left to the catechumens to answer from their own judgment and in their own words; or which may require no other answer than *yes*, or *no*, intelligently delivered. "If they answer wrong, they must in an easy way be shewn their mistake, and their judgments be better informed." Mr. Hallet has given us a large specimen of this mode

of interrogation as practised by the great Mr. Peirce: "The design of whose method," he tells us, "was to teach children to reason, to believe nothing without proof, to see with their own eyes, to guard them against seducers and to establish them in an unshaken regard to the doctrines and commands of the gospel *."

5. The preceding rules apply chiefly to catechumens under sixteen years of age. Youth, after that period, especially if their minds have been previously opened, and stored with the first principles of knowledge, may be supposed capable of more set and longer discourses, and schemes of instruction under the form of lectures. Here then comes in the plan, which was ably, excellently and succesfully pursued by Dr. Priestley; and has been adopted by others. He formed his young persons into an *academical class* and adopted the same methods to teach them the elements of religion as professors of the sciences do to teach the rudiments of any branch of natural knowledge. He delivered his thoughts from a written tract; afterwards printed under the title of "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion." In reading these lectures he allowed himself the liberty of saying the same things over and over again,

* A Collection of Notes, v. i. p. 174, &c.

of

of changing his forms of expression, of illustrating his subject by familiar instances and examples, and of setting every thing of importance in a great variety of lights, by familiar converse. The same method, to assist reflection, may be pursued in the other mode of catechising. The catechism is only the text book*.

Lastly. Open, or close these exercises with a short prayer, seriously and fervently delivered; affectionately commending the young circle around you to the God of wisdom, to enlighten their minds, to direct their steps, to fix deeply in their hearts the principles of piety and virtue, to conduct them through the future scenes of life with comfort and safety, honour and usefulness, and to guide them by his counsels to everlasting life and glory. Prayer will give a weight and solemnity to the whole exercise; express a tender and benevolent concern for the rising generation, be suitable and graceful in this connexion and tend to give a devotional cast to the thoughts and spirits of the catechumens. Wisdom, truth and virtue are from God. All efforts to promote them should be conducted in humble dependence on his aid and blessing.

* Institutes, v. i. Introductory Essay.

In a word; "the duty of catechising should be diligently practised, especially with regard to the young. It is by this means they can best learn the great articles of the Christian religion; if they do not learn them then, they will scarce ever learn them thoroughly; but if they learn them then, they will keep a fast hold of them to the end of their lives. It is with the young that most benefit can be expected from it: their minds are open to truth, and pliable to goodness; on those who are already confirmed either in ignorance or in vice, it cannot be expected that so great an impression will be made *."

* Gerrard's Pastoral Care, p. 222.

FINIS.

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